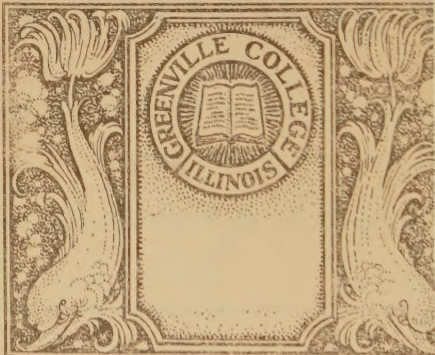


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OMAR KHAYYAM



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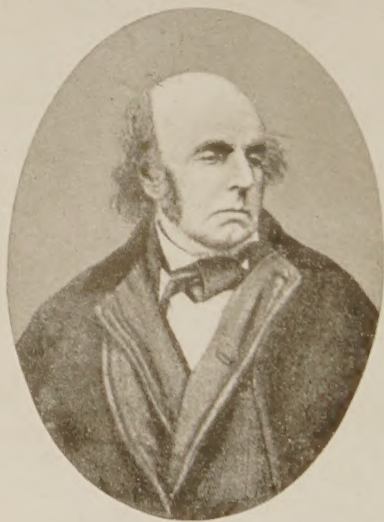
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EDWARD FITZGERALD.

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RUBAIYAT OF
OMAR KHAYYAM
AND THE
SALAMAN AND
ABSAL OF JAMI

RENDERED INTO ENGLISH VERSE

BY

EDWARD FITZGERALD

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BIOGRAPHICAL PREFACE.

Edward Fitzgerald, whom the world has already learned, in spite of his own efforts to remain within the shadow of anonymity, to look upon as one of the rarest poets of the century, was born at Bredfield, in Suffolk, on the 31st of March, 1809. He was the third son of John Purcell, of Kilkenny, in Ireland, who, marrying Miss Mary Frances Fitzgerald, daughter of John Fitzgerald, of Williamstown, County Waterford, added that distinguished name to his own patronymic; and the future Omar was thus doubly of Irish extraction. (Both the families of Purcell and Fitzgerald claim descent from Norman warriors of the eleventh century.) This circumstance is thought to have had some influence in attracting him to the study of Persian poetry, Iran and Erin being almost convertible terms in the early days of modern ethnology. After some years of primary education at the grammar school of Bury St. Edmunds, he entered Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1826, and there formed acquaintance with several young men of great abilities, most of whom rose to distinction before him, but never ceased to regard with affectionate remembrance the quiet

and amiable associate of their college-days. Amongst them were Alfred Tennyson, James Spedding, William Bodham Donne, John Mitchell Kemble, and William Makepeace Thackeray; and their long friendship has been touchingly referred to by the Laureate in dedicating his last poem to the memory of Edward Fitzgerald. "Euphranor," our author's earliest printed work, affords a curious picture of his academic life and associations. Its substantial reality is evident beneath the thin disguise of the symbolical or classical names which he gives to the personages of the colloquy; and the speeches which he puts into his own mouth are full of the humorous gravity, the whimsical and kindly philosophy, which remained his distinguishing characteristics till the end. This book was first published in 1851; a second and a third edition were printed some years later; all anonymous, and each of the latter two differing from its predecessors by changes in the text which were not indicated on the title-pages.

"Euphranor" furnishes a good many characteristics which would be useful for any writer treating upon Cambridge society in the third decade of this century. Kenelm Digby, the author of the "Broadstone of Honor," had left Cambridge before the time when Euphranor held his "dialogue," but he is picturesquely recollected as "a grand swarthy fellow who might have stepped out of the canvas of some knightly portrait in his father's hall—perhaps the living image of one sleeping

under some cross-legged effigies in the church." In "Euphranor," it is easy to discover the earliest phase of the unconquerable attachment which Fitzgerald entertained for his college and his life-long friends, and which induced him in later days to make frequent visits to Cambridge, renewing and refreshing the old ties of custom and friendship. In fact, his disposition was affectionate to a fault, and he betrayed his consciousness of weakness in that respect by referring playfully at times to "a certain natural lubricity" which he attributed to the Irish character, and professed to discover especially in himself. This amiability of temper endeared him to many friends of totally dissimilar tastes and qualities; and, by enlarging his sympathies, enabled him to enjoy the fructifying influence of studies pursued in communion with scholars more profound than himself, but less gifted with the power of expression. One of the younger Cambridge men with whom he became intimate during his periodical pilgrimages to the university, was Edward B. Cowell, a man of the highest attainment in Oriental learning, who resembled Fitzgerald himself in the possession of a warm and genial heart and the most unobtrusive modesty. From Cowell he could easily learn that the hypothetical affinity between the names of Erin and Iran belonged to an obsolete stage of etymology; but the attraction of a far-fetched theory was replaced by the charm of reading Persian poetry in companionship with his young friend,

who was equally competent to enjoy and to analyze the beauties of a literature that formed a portion of his regular studies. They read together the poetical remains of Khayyam—a choice of reading which sufficiently indicates the depth and range of Mr. Cowell's knowledge. Omar Khayyam, although not quite forgotten, enjoyed in the history of Persian literature a celebrity like that of Occleve and Gower in our own. In the many *Tazkirat* (memoirs or memorials) of Poets, he was mentioned and quoted with esteem; but his poems, laboring as they did under the original sin of heresy and atheism, were seldom looked at, and, from lack of demand on the part of readers, had become rarer than those of most other writers since the days of Firdausi. European scholars know little of his works beyond his Arabic treatise on Algebra, and Mr. Cowell may be said to have disinterred his poems, from oblivion. Now, thanks to the fine taste of that scholar, and to the transmuting genius of Fitzgerald, no Persian poet is so well known in the western world as Abu-'l-fat'h 'Omar son of Ibrahim the Tentmaker of Naishapur, whose manhood synchronizes with the Norman conquest of England, and who took for his poetic name (*takhallus*) the designation of his father's trade (*Khayyam*). The "Ruba'iyyat" (Quatrains) do not compose a single poem divided into a certain number of stanzas; there is no continuity of plan in them, and each stanza is a distinct thought expressed in musical verse. There is no other element

of unity in them than the general tendency of the Epicurean idea, and the arbitrary divan form by which they are grouped according to the alphabetical arrangement of the final letters; those in which the rhymes end in *a* constituting the first division, those with *b* the second, and so on. The peculiar attitude toward religion and the old questions of fate, immortality, the origin and the destiny of man, which educated thinkers have assumed in the present age of Christendom, is found admirably foreshadowed in the fantastic verses of Khayyam, who was no more of a Moham-medan than many of our best writers are Christians. His philosophical and Horatian fancies—graced as they are by the charms of a lyrical expression equal to that of Horace, and a vivid brilliance of imagination to which the Roman poet could make no claim—exercised a powerful influence upon Fitzgerald's mind, and colored his thoughts to such a degree that even when he oversteps the largest license allowed to a translator, his phrases reproduce the spirit and manner of his original with a nearer approach to perfection than would appear possible. It is usually supposed that there is more of Fitzgerald than of Khayyam in the English "Ruba'iyyat," and that the old Persian simply afforded themes for the Anglo-Irishman's display of poetic power; but nothing could be further from the truth. The French translator, J. B. Nicolas, and the English one, Mr. Whinfield, supply a closer mechanical reflection of the sense in each

separate stanza; but Mr. Fitzgerald has, in some instances, given a version equally close and exact; in others, rejoined scattered phrases from more than one stanza of his original, and thus accomplished a feat of marvelous poetical transfusion. He frequently turns literally into English the strange outlandish imagery which Mr. Whinfield thought necessary to replace by more intelligible banalities, and in this way the magic of his genius has successfully transplanted into the garden of English poesy exotics that bloom like native flowers.

One of Mr. Fitzgerald's Woodbridge friends was Bernard Barton, the Quaker poet, with whom he maintained for many years the most intimate and cordial intercourse, and whose daughter Lucy he married. He wrote the memoir of his friend's life which appeared in the posthumous volume of Barton's poems. The story of his married life was a short one. With all the overflowing amiability of his nature, there were mingled certain peculiarities or waywardnesses which were more suitable to the freedom of celibacy than to the staidness of matrimonial life. A separation took place by mutual agreement, and Fitzgerald behaved in this circumstance with the generosity and unselfishness which were apparent in all his whims no less than in his more deliberate actions. Indeed, his entire career was marked by an unchanging goodness of heart and a genial kindliness; and no one could complain of having ever endured hurt or ill-treatment

at his hands. His pleasures were innocent and simple. Amongst the more delightful, he counted the short coasting trips, occupying no more than a day or two at a time, which he used to make in his own yacht from Lowestoft, accompanied only by a crew of two men, and such a friend as Cowell, with a large pasty and a few bottles of wine to supply their material wants. It is needless to say that books were also put into the cabin, and that the symposia of the friends were thus brightened by communion with the minds of the great departed. Fitzgerald's enjoyment of gnomic wisdom enshrined in words of exquisite propriety was evinced by the frequency with which he used to read Montaigne's essays and Madame de Sevigne's letters, and the various works from which he extracted and published his collection of wise saws entitled "Polonius." This taste was allied to a love for what was classical and correct in literature, by which he was also enabled to appreciate the prim and formal muse of Crabbe, in whose grandson's house he died.

His second printed work was the "Polonius," already referred to, which appeared in 1852. It exemplifies his favorite reading, being a collection of extracts, sometimes short proverbial phrases, sometimes longer pieces of characterization or reflection, arranged under abstract headings. He occasionally quotes Dr. Johnson, for whom he entertained sincere admiration; but the ponderous and artificial fabric of Johnsonese did not please

him like the language of Bacon, Fuller, Sir Thomas Browne, Coleridge, whom he cites frequently. A disproportionate abundance of wise words was drawn from Carlyle; his original views, his forcible sense, and the friendship with which Fitzgerald regarded him, having apparently blinded the latter to the ungainly style and ungraceful mannerisms of the Chelsea sage. (It was Thackeray who first made them personally acquainted forty years ago; and Fitzgerald remained always loyal to his first instincts of affection and admiration.*) Polonius also marks the period of his earliest attention to Persian studies, as he quotes in it the great Sufi poet Jalal-ud-din-Rumi, whose "Masnavi" has lately been translated into English by Mr. Redhouse, but whom Fitzgerald can only have seen in the original. He, however, spells the name *Jallaladin*, an incorrect form of which he could not have been guilty at the time when he produced Omar Khayyam, and which thus betrays that he had not long been engaged with

*The close relation that subsisted between Fitzgerald and Carlyle has lately been made patent by an article in the *Historical Review* upon the Squire papers,—those celebrated documents purporting to be contemporary records of Cromwell's time,—which were accepted by Carlyle as genuine, but which other scholars have asserted from internal evidence to be modern forgeries. However the question may be decided, the fact which concerns us here is that our poet was the negotiator between Mr. Squire and Carlyle, and that his correspondence with the latter upon the subject reveals the intimate nature of their acquaintance.

Irani literature. He was very fond of Montaigne's essays, and of Pascal's "Pensees;" but his "Polonius" reveals a sort of dislike and contempt for Voltaire. Amongst the Germans, Jean Paul, Goethe, Alexander von Humboldt, and August Wilhelm von Schlegel attracted him greatly; but he seems to have read little German, and probably only quoted translations. His favorite motto was "Plain Living and High Thinking," and he expresses great reverence for all things manly, simple, and true. The laws and institutions of England were, in his eyes of the highest value and sacredness; and whatever Irish sympathies he had would never have diverted his affections from the Union to Home Rule. This is strongly illustrated by some original lines of blank verse at the end of "Polonius," annexed to his quotation, under "Æsthetics," of the words in which Lord Palmerston eulogized Mr. Gladstone for having devoted his Neapolitan tour to an inspection of the prisons.

Fitzgerald's next printed work was a translation of Six Dramas of Calderon, published in 1853, which was unfavorably received at the time, and consequently withdrawn by him from circulation. His name appeared on the title page,—a concession to publicity which was so unusual with him that it must have been made under strong pressure from his friends. The book is in nervous blank verse, a mode of composition which he handled with great ease and skill. There is no waste of power in diffuseness and no employment of

unnecessary epithets. It gives the impression of a work of the Shakespearean age, and reveals a kindred felicity, strength, and directness of language. It deserves to rank with his best efforts in poetry, but its ill-success made him feel that the publication of his name was an unfavorable experiment, and he never again repeated it. His great modesty, however, would sufficiently account for this shyness. Of "Omar Khayyam," even after the little book had won its way to general esteem, he used to say that the suggested addition of his name on the title would imply an assumption of importance which he considered that his "transmogrification" of the Persian poet did not possess.

Fitzgerald's conception of a translator's privilege is well set forth in the prefaces of his versions from Calderon, and the "Agamemnon" of Æschylus. He maintained that, in the absence of the perfect poet, who shall recreate in his own language the body and soul of his original, the best system is that of a paraphrase conserving the spirit of the author, — a sort of literary metempsychosis. Calderon, Æschylus, and Omar Khayyam were all treated with equal license, so far as form is concerned, — the last, perhaps, the most arbitrarily; but the result is not unsatisfactory as having given us perfect English poems instinct with the true flavor of their prototypes. The Persian was probably somewhat more Horatian and less melancholy, the Greek a little less florid and mystic, the Spaniard more

lyrical and fluent, than their metaphrast has made them; but the essential spirit has not escaped in transfusion. Only a man of singular gifts could have performed the achievement, and these works attest Mr. Fitzgerald's right to rank amongst the finest poets of the century. About the same time as he printed his Calderon, another set of translations from the same dramatist was published by the late D. F. MacCarthy; a scholar whose acquaintance with Castilian literature was much deeper than Mr. Fitzgerald's, and who also possessed poetical abilities of no mean order, with a totally different sense of the translator's duty. The popularity of MacCarthy's versions has been considerable, and as an equivalent rendering of the original in sense and form his work is valuable. Spaniards familiar with the English language rate its merits highly; but there can be little question of the very great superiority Mr. Fitzgerald's work as a contribution to English literature. It is indeed only from this point of view that we should regard all the literary labors of our author. They are English poetical work of fine quality, dashed with a pleasant outlandish flavor which heightens their charm; and it is as English poems, not as translations, that they have endeared themselves even more to the American English than to the mixed Britons of England.

It was an occasion of no small moment to Mr. Fitzgerald's fame, and to the intellectual gratification of many thousands of readers, when he took his little packet of "Ruba'iyyat"

to Mr. Quaritch in the latter part of the year 1858. It was printed as a small quarto pamphlet, bearing the publisher's name but not the author's; and although apparently a complete failure at first,—a failure which Mr. Fitzgerald regretted less on his own account than on that of his publisher, to whom he had generously made a present of the book,—received, nevertheless, a sufficient distribution by being quickly reduced from the price of five shillings and placed in the box of cheap books marked a penny each. Thus forced into circulation, the two hundred copies which had been printed were soon exhausted. Among the buyers were Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Mr. Swinburne, Captain (now Sir Richard) Burton, and Mr. William Simpson, the accomplished artist of the Illustrated London News. The influence exercised by the first three, especially by Rossetti, upon a clique of young men who have since grown to distinction, was sufficient to attract observation to the singular beauties of the poem anonymously translated from the Persian. Most readers had no possible opportunity of discovering whether it was a disguised original or an actual translation;—even Captain Burton enjoyed probably but little chance of seeing a manuscript of the Persian "*Ruba'iiyyat*." The Oriental imagery and allusions were too thickly scattered throughout the verses to favor the notion that they could be the original work of an Englishman; yet it was shrewdly suspected by most of the appreciative readers that the "trans-

lator" was substantially the author and creator of the poem. In the refuge of his anonymity, Fitzgerald derived an innocent gratification from the curiosity that was aroused on all sides. After the first edition had disappeared, inquiries for the little book became frequent, and in the year 1868 he gave the MS. of his second edition to Mr. Quaritch, and the "Ruba'iyat" came into circulation once more, but with several alterations and additions by which the number of stanzas was somewhat increased beyond the original seventy-five. Most of the changes were, as might have been expected, improvements; but in some instances the author's taste or caprice was at fault,—notably in the first *Ruba'iy*. His fastidious desire to avoid anything that seemed *baroque* or unnatural, or appeared like plagiarism, may have influenced him; but it was probably because he had already used the idea in his rendering of Jami's "Salaman," that he sacrificed a fine and novel piece of imagery in his first stanza and replaced it by one of much more ordinary character. If it were from a dislike to pervert his original too largely, he had no need to be so scrupulous, since he dealt on the whole with the "Ruba'iyat" as though he had the license of absolute authorship, changing, transposing, and manipulating the substance of the Persian quatrains with singular freedom. The vogue of "old Omar" (as he would affectionately call his work) went on increasing, and American readers took it up with eagerness. In those days,

the mere mention of Omar Khayyam between two strangers meeting fortuitously acted like a sign of freemasonry and established frequently a bond of friendship. Some curious instances of this have been related. A remarkable feature of the Omar-cult in the United States was the circumstance that single individuals bought numbers of copies for gratuitous distribution before the book was reprinted in America. Its editions have been relatively numerous, when we consider how restricted was the circle of readers who could understand the peculiar beauties of the work. A third edition appeared in 1872, with some further alterations, and may be regarded as virtually the author's final revision, for it hardly differs at all from the text of the fourth edition, which appeared in 1879. This last formed the first portion of a volume entitled "Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam; and the Salaman and Absal of Jami; rendered into English verse." The "Salaman" (which had already been printed in separate form in 1856) is a poem chiefly in blank verse, interspersed with various meters (although it is all in one measure in the original) embodying a love-story of mystic significance; for Jami was, unlike Omar Khayyam, a true Sufi, and indeed differed in other respects, his celebrity as a pious Mussulman doctor being equal to his fame as a poet. He lived in the fifteenth century, in a period of literary brilliancy and decay; and the rich exuberance of his poetry, full of far-fetched conceits, involved expressions, overstrained imagery, and

false taste, offers a strong contrast to the simpler and more forcible language of Khayyam. There is little use of Arabic in the earlier poet; he preferred the vernacular speech to the mongrel language which was fashionable among the heirs of the Saracen conquerors; but Jami's composition is largely embroidered with Arabic.

Mr. Fitzgerald had from his early days been thrown into contact with the Crabbe family; the Reverend George Crabbe (the poet's grandson) was an intimate friend of his, and it was on a visit to Morton Rectory that Fitzgerald died. As we know that friendship has power to warp the judgment, we shall not probably be wrong in supposing that his enthusiastic admiration for Crabbe's poems was not the product of sound, impartial criticism. He attempted to reintroduce them to the world by publishing a little volume of "Readings from Crabbe," produced in the last year of his life, but without success. A different fate awaited his "Agamemnon: a tragedy taken from Æschylus," which was first printed privately by him, and afterward published with alterations in 1876. It is a very free rendering from the Greek, and full of a poetical beauty which is but partly assignable to Æschylus. Without attaining to anything like the celebrity and admiration which have followed Omar Khayyam, the "Agamemnon" has achieved much more than a *succes d'estime*. Mr. Fitzgerald's renderings from the Greek were not confined to this one essay; he also translated the two

Œdipus dramas of Sophocles, but left them unfinished in manuscript till Prof. Eliot Norton had a sight of them about seven or eight years ago and urged him to complete his work. When this was done, he had them set in type, but only a very few proofs can have been struck off, as it seems that, at least in England, no more than one or two copies were sent out by the author. In a similar way he printed translations of two of Calderon's plays not included in the published "Six Dramas"—namely, "La Vida es Sueno," and "El Magico Prodigioso" (both ranking among the Spaniard's finest work); but they also were withheld from the public and all but half a dozen friends.

When his old boatman died, about ten years ago, he abandoned his nautical exercises and gave up his yacht for ever. During the last few years of his life he divided his time between Cambridge, Crabbe's house and his own home at Little Grange, near Woodbridge, where he received occasional visits from friends and relatives.

This edition of the "Omar Khayyam" is a modest memorial of one of the most modest men who have enriched English literature with poetry of distinct and permanent value. His best epitaph is found in Tennyson's "Tiresias and Other Poems," published immediately after our author's quiet exit from life, in 1883, in the seventy-fifth year of his age.

M. K.

TO E. FITZGERALD.*

Old Fitz, who from your suburb grange,
Where once I tarried for a while,
Glance at the wheeling Orb of change,
And greet it with a kindly smile;
Whom yet I see as there you sit
Beneath your sheltering garden-tree,
And watch your doves about you flit,
And plant on shoulder, hand and knee,
Or on your head their rosy feet,
As if they knew your diet spares
Whatever moved in that full sheet
Let down to Peter at his prayers;
Who live on milk and meal and grass;
And once for ten long weeks I tried
Your table of Pythagoras,
And seem'd at first "a thing enskied"
(As Shakespeare has it) airy-light
To float above the ways of men,
Then fell from that half-spiritual height
Chill'd, till I tasted flesh again
One night when earth was winter-black,
And all the heavens flash'd in frost;
And on me, half-asleep, came back
That wholesome heat the blood had lost,
And set me climbing icy capes
And glaciers, over which there roll'd

* Epilogue by Alfred, Lord Tennyson.

To meet me long-arm'd vines with grapes
Of Eshcol hugeness; for the cold
Without and warmth within me, wrought
To mould the dream; but none can say
That Lenten fare makes Lenten thought,
Who reads your golden Eastern lay,
Than which I know no version done
In English more divinely well;
A planet equal to the sun
Which cast it, that large infidel
Your Omar; and your Omar drew
Full-handed plaudits from our best
In modern letters, and from two,
Old friends outvaluing all the rest,
Two voices heard on earth no more;
But we old friends are still alive,
And I am nearing seventy-four,
While you have touch'd at seventy-five,
And so I send a birthday line
Of greeting; and my son, who dipt
In some forgotten book of mine
With sallow scraps of manuscript,
And dating many a year ago,
Has hit on this, which you will take,
My Fitz, and welcome, as I know,
Less for its own than for the sake
Of one recalling gracious times,
When, in our younger London days,
You found some merit in my rhymes,
And I more pleasure in your praise

RUBAIYAT
OF
OMAR KHAYYAM,
THE
ASTRONOMER-POET OF PERSIA
RENDERED INTO ENGLISH VERSE.



OMAR KHAYYAM,
THE
ASTRONOMER-POET OF PERSIA.
BY EDWARD FITZGERALD.

Omar Khayyam was born at Naishapur in Khorassan in the latter half of our Eleventh, and died within the First Quarter of our Twelfth Century. The slender Story of his Life is curiously twined about that of two other very considerable Figures in their Time and Country: one of whom tells the Story of all Three. This was Nizam ul Mulk, Vizier to Alp Arslan the Son, and Malik Shah the Grandson, of Toghrul Beg the Tartar, who had wrested Persia from the feeble Successor of Mahmud the Great, and founded that Seljukian Dynasty which finally roused Europe into the Crusades. This Nizam ul Mulk, in his *Wasiyat*—or Testament—which he wrote and left as a Memorial for future Statesmen—relates the following, as quoted in the Calcutta Review, No. 59, from Mirkhond's History of the Assassins.

“ ‘One of the greatest of the wise men of Khorassan was the Imam Mowaffak of Naishapur, a man highly honoured and rever-

'enced,—may God rejoice his soul; his illustrious years exceeded eighty-five, and it was the universal belief that every boy who read the Koran or studied the traditions in his presence, would assuredly attain to honour and happiness. For this cause did my father send me from Tus to Naishapur with Abd-us-samad, the doctor of law, that I might employ myself in study and learning under the guidance of that illustrious teacher. Towards me he ever turned an eye of favour and kindness, and as his pupil I felt for him extreme affection and devotion, so that I passed four years in his service. When I first came there, I found two other pupils of mine own age newly arrived, Hakim Omar Khayyam, and the ill-fated Ben Sabbah. Both were endowed with sharpness of wit and the highest natural powers; and we three formed a close friendship together. When the Imam rose from his lectures, they used to join me, and we repeated to each other the lessons we had heard. Now Omar was a native of Naishapur, while Hasan Ben Sabbah's father was one Ali, a man of austere life and practise, but heretical in his creed and doctrine. One day Hasan said to me and to Khayyam, 'It is a universal belief that the pupils of the Imam Mowaffak will attain to fortune. Now, even if we all do not attain thereto, without doubt one of us will; what then shall be our mutual pledge and bond?' We answered, 'Be it what you please.' 'Well,' he said, 'let us make a vow, that to whomsoever this fortune falls, he shall share

'it equally with the rest, and reserve no pre-eminence for himself.' 'Be it so,' we both replied, and on those terms we mutually pledged our words. Years rolled on, and I went from Khorassan to Transoxiana, and wandered to Ghazni and Cabul; and when I returned, I was invested with office, and rose to be administrator of affairs during the Sultanate of Sultan Alp Arslan.'

"He goes on to state, that years passed by, and both his old school-friends found him out, and came and claimed a share in his good fortune, according to the school-day vow. The Vizier was generous and kept his word. Hasan demanded a place in the government, which the Sultan granted at the Vizier's request; but discontented with a gradual rise, he plunged into the maze of intrigue of an Oriental court, and, failing in a base attempt to supplant his benefactor, he was disgraced and fell. After many mishaps and wanderings, Hasan became the head of the Persian sect of the Ismailians, —a party of fanatics who had long murmured in obscurity, but rose to an evil eminence under the guidance of his strong and evil will. In A. D. 1090, he seized the castle of Alamut, in the province of Rudbar, which lies in the mountainous tract south of the Caspian Sea; and it was from this mountain home he obtained that evil celebrity among the Crusaders as the "Old Man of the Mountains," and spread terror through the Mohammedan world; and it is yet disputed whether the word Assassin, which they have left in the language of mod-

ern Europe as their dark memorial, is derived from the *hashish*, or opiate of hemp-leaves (the Indian *bhang*), with which they maddened themselves to the sullen pitch of Oriental desperation, or from the name of the founder of the dynasty, whom we have seen in his quiet collegiate days, at Naishapur. One of the countless victims of the Assassin's dagger was Nizam-ul-Mulk himself, the old school-boy friend.*

"Omar Khayyam also came to the Vizier to claim his share; but not to ask for title or office. 'The greatest boon you can confer on me,' he said, 'is to let me live in a corner under the shadow of your fortune, to spread wide the advantages of Science, and pray for your long life and prosperity.' The Vizier tells us, that, when he found Omar was really sincere in his refusal, he pressed him no further, but granted him a yearly pension of 1200 *mithkals* of gold, from the treasury of Naishapur.

"At Naishapur thus lived and died Omar Khayyam, 'busied,' adds the Vizier, 'in winning knowledge of every kind, and especially in Astronomy, wherein he attained to a very high pre-eminence. Under the Sultanate of Malik Shah, he came to Merv, and obtained

*Some of Omar's Rubaiyat warn us of the danger of Greatness, the instability of Fortune, and while advocating Charity to all Men, recommending us to be too intimate with none Attar makes Nizam-ul-Mulk use the very words of his friend Omar [Rub. xxviii.], "When Nizam-ul-Mulk was in the Agony (of Death) he said, 'Oh God! I am passing away in the hand of the wind.'"

'great praise for his proficiency in science, and
'the Sultan showered favours upon him.'

"When Malik Shah determined to reform the calendar, Omar was one of the eight learned men employed to do it; the result was the *Jalali* era (so called from *Jalal-ud-din*, one of the king's names)—'a computation of time,' says Gibbon, 'which surpasses the Julian, and approaches the accuracy of the Gregorian style.' He is also the author of some astronomical tables, entitled "*Ziji-Malikshahi*," and the French have lately republished and translated an Arabic Treatise of his on Algebra.

— "His Takhallus or poetical name (Khayyam) signifies a Tent-maker, and he is said to have at one time exercised that trade, perhaps before Nizam-ul-Mulk's generosity raised him to independence. Many Persian poets similarly derive their names from their occupations; thus we have Attar, 'a druggist,' Assar, 'an oil presser,' etc.* Omar himself alludes to his name in the following whimsical lines:

'Khayyam who stitched the tents of science,
Has fallen in grief's furnace and been suddenly burned;
The shears of Fate have cut the tent ropes of his life,
And the Broker of hope has sold him for nothing!'

"We have only one more anecdote to give of his Life, and that relates to the close; it is told in the anonymous preface which is sometimes prefixed to his poems; it has been printed in

*Though all these, like our Smiths, Archers, Millers, Fletchers, etc., may simply retain the Surname of an hereditary calling.

the Persian in the Appendix to Hyde's *Veterum Persarum Religio*, p. 499; and D'Herbelot alludes to it in his *Bibliothèque* under *Khiam*.*—

"It is written in the chronicles of the ancients that this King of the Wise, Omar Khayyam, died at Naishapur in the year of the Hegira, 517 (A. D. 1123); in science he was unrivaled,—the very paragon of his age. Khwajah Nizami of Samarcand, who was one of his pupils, relates the following story: 'I often used to hold conversations with my teacher, Omar Khayyam, in the garden; and one day he said to me, 'My tomb shall be in a spot where the north wind may scatter roses over it.' I wondered at the words he spake, but I knew that his were no idle words.† Years after, when I chanced to revisit

*"Philosophe Musulman qui a vecu en Odeur de Saintete dans sa Religion, vers la Fin du premier et le Commencement du second Siecle," no part of which, except the "Philosophe," can apply to our Khayyam.

†The Rashness of the Words, according to D'Herbelot, consisted in being so opposed to those in the Koran: "No man knows where he shall die."—This story of Omar reminds me of another so naturally—and when one remembers how wide of his humble mark the noble sailor aimed—so pathetically told by Captain Cook—not by Doctor Hawkesworth—in his *Second Voyage* (i. 374). When leaving Ulietea, "Oreo's last request was for me to return. When he saw he could not obtain that promise, he asked the name of my *Marai* (burying-place). As strange a question as this was, I hesitated not a moment to tell him 'Stepney;' the parish in which I live when in London. I was made to repeat it several times over till they could pronounce it; and then 'Stepney Marai no Toote' was echoed through an hundred

' Naishapur, I went to his final resting-place,
' and lo! it was just outside a garden, and trees
' laden with fruit stretched their boughs over
' the garden wall, and dropped their flowers
' upon his tomb, so that the stone was hidden
' under them.' "

Thus far—without fear of Trespass—from the Calcutta Review. The writer of it, on reading in India this story of Omar's Grave, was reminded, he says, of Cicero's Account of finding Archimedes' Tomb at Syracuse, buried in grass and weeds. I think Thorwaldsen desired to have roses grow over him; a wish religiously fulfilled for him to the present day, I believe. However to return to Omar.

Though the Sultan "shower'd Favours upon him," Omar's Epicurean Audacity of Thought and Speech caused him to be regarded askance in his own Time and Country. He is said to have been especially hated and dreaded by the Sufis, whose Practice he ridiculed, and whose Faith amounts to little more than his own, when stript of the Mysticism and formal recognition of Islamism under which Omar would not hide. Their Poets, including Hafiz, who are (with the exception of Firdausi) the most considerable in Persia, borrowed largely, indeed, of Omar's material, but turning it to a mystical use more convenient to Themselves

mouths at once. I afterward found the same question had been put to Mr. Foster by a man on shore; but he gave a different, and indeed more proper answer, by saying, 'No man who used the sea could say where he should be buried.' "

and the People they addressed; a People quite as quick of Doubt as of Belief; as keen of Bodily Sense as of Intellectual; and delighting in a cloudy composition of both, in which they could float luxuriously between Heaven and Earth, and this World and the Next, on the wings of a poetical expression, that might serve indifferently for either. Omar was too honest of Heart as well as of Head for this. Having failed (however mistakenly) of finding any Providence but Destiny, and any World but This, he set about making the most of it; preferring rather to soothe the Soul through the Senses into Acquiescence with things as he saw them, than to perplex it with vain disquietude after what they might be. It has been seen, however, that his Worldly Ambition was not exorbitant; and he very likely takes a humorous or perverse pleasure in exalting the gratification of Sense above that of the Intellect, in which he must have taken great delight, although it failed to answer the Questions in which he, in common, with all men was most vitally interested.

For whatever Reason, however, Omar, as before said, has ever been popular in his own Country, and therefore has been but scantily transmitted abroad. The MSS. of his Poems, mutilated beyond the average Casualties of Oriental Transcription, are so rare in the East as scarce to have reacht Westward at all, in spite of all the acquisitions of Arms and Science. There is no copy at the India House, none at the Bibliotheque Nationale of Paris. We know but of one in England: No. 140 of the Ouseley

MSS. at the Bodleian, written at Shiraz, A.D. 1460. This contains but 158 Rubaiyat. One in the Asiatic Society's Library at Calcutta (of which we have a Copy), contains (and yet incomplete) 516, though swelled to that by all kinds of Repetition and Corruption. So Von Hammer speaks of his Copy as containing about 200, while Dr. Sprenger catalogues the Lucknow MS. at double that number.* The Scribes, too, of the Oxford and Calcutta MSS. seem to do their Work under a sort of Protest; each beginning with a Tetrastich (whether genuine or not), taken out of its alphabetical order; the Oxford with one of Apology; the Calcutta with one of Expostulation, supposed (says a Notice prefixed to the MS.) to have arisen from a Dream, in which Omar's mother asked about his future fate. It may be rendered thus:—

"Oh Thou who burn'st in Heart for those who burn
 "In Hell, whose fires thyself shall feed in turn;
 "How long be crying, 'Mercy on them, God!'
 "Why, who art Thou to teach, and He to learn?"

The Bodleian Quatrain pleads Pantheism by way of Justification.

"If I myself upon a looser Creed
 "Have loosely strung the Jewel of Good deed,
 "Let this one thing for my Atonement plead:
 "That One for Two I never did mis-read."

*"Since this paper was written," (adds the Reviewer in a note), "we have met with a Copy of a very rare Edition, printed at Calcutta in 1836. This contains 438 Tetrastichs, with an Appendix containing 54 others not found in some MSS."

The Reviewer,* to whom I owe the Particulars of Omar's Life, concludes his Review by comparing him with Lucretius, both as to natural Temper and Genius, and as acted upon by the circumstances in which he lived. Both indeed were men of subtle, strong, and cultivated Intellect, fine Imagination, and Hearts passionate for Truth and Justice; who justly revolted from their Country's false Religion, and false, or foolish, Devotion to it; but who fell short of replacing what they subverted by such better Hope as others, with no better Revelation to guide them, had yet made a Law to themselves. Lucretius, indeed, with such material as Epicurus furnished, satisfied himself with the theory of a vast machine fortuitously constructed, and acting by a Law that implied no Legislator; and so composing himself into a Stoical rather than Epicurean severity of Attitude, sat down to contemplate the mechanical Drama of the Universe which he was part Actor in; himself and all about him (as in his own sublime description of the Roman Theater) discolored with the lurid reflex of the Curtain suspended between the Spectator and the Sun. Omar, more desperate or more careless of any so complicated System as resulted in nothing but hopeless Necessity, flung his own genius and Learning with a bitter or humorous jest into the general Ruin which their insufficient glimpses only served to reveal; and, pretending sensual pleasure as

*Professor Cowell.

the serious purpose of Life, only diverted himself with speculative problems of Deity, Destiny, Matter and Spirit, Good and Evil, and other such questions, easier to start than to run down, and the pursuit of which becomes a very weary sport at last!

With regard to the present Translation. The original Rubaiyat (as missing an Arabic Guttural, these *Tetrastichs* are more musically called) are independent Stanzas, consisting each of four Lines of equal, though varied, Prosody; sometimes all rhyming, but oftener (as here imitated) the third line a blank. Somewhat as in the Greek Alcaic, where the penultimate line seems to lift and suspend the Wave that falls over in the last. As usual with such kind of Oriental Verse, the Rubaiyat follow one another according to Alphabetic Rhyme—a strange succession of Grave and Gay. Those here selected are strung into something of an Eclogue, with perhaps a less than equal proportion of the “Drink and make-merry,” which (genuine or not) recurs over-frequently in the Original. Either way, the result is sad enough: saddest perhaps when most ostentatiously merry: more apt to move Sorrow than Anger toward the old Tentmaker, who, after vainly endeavoring to unshackle his steps from Destiny, and to catch some authentic Glimpse of To-morrow fell back upon to-day (which has outlasted so many to-morrows!) as the only ground he had got to stand upon, however momentarily slipping from under his Feet.

While the second Edition of this version of Omar was preparing, Monsieur Nicolas, French Consul at Resht, published a very careful and very good Edition of the Text, from a lithograph copy at Teheran, comprising 464 Rubaiyat, with translation and notes of his own.

Mons. Nicolas, whose Edition has reminded me of several things, and instructed me in others, does not consider Omar to be the material Epicurean that I have literally taken him for, but a Mystic, shadowing the Deity under the figure of Wine, Wine-bearer, etc., as Hafiz is supposed to do; in short, a Sufi Poet like Hafiz and the rest.

I cannot see reason to alter my opinion, formed as it was more than a dozen years ago* when Omar was first shown me by one to whom I am indebted for all I know of Oriental, and very much of other, literature. He admired Omar's Genius so much, that he would gladly have adopted any such Interpretation of his meaning as Mons. Nicolas' if he could.† That he could not, appears by his Paper in the Calcutta Review already so largely quoted; in which he argues from the Poems themselves, as well as from what records remain of the Poet's Life.

And if more were needed to disprove Mons. Nicolas' Theory, there is the Biographical Notice which he himself has drawn up in

*[This was written in 1868. W. A. W.]

†Perhaps would have edited the Poems himself some years ago. He may now as little approve of my Version on one side, as of Mons. Nicolas' Theory on the other.

direct contradiction to the Interpretation of the Poems given in his Notes. (See pp. xiii-xiv of his Preface.) Indeed, I hardly knew poor Omar was so far gone till his Apologist informed me. For here we see that, whatever were the Wine that Hafiz drank and sang, the veritable Juice of the Grape it was which Omar used, not only when carousing with his friends, but (says Mons. Nicolas) in order to excite himself to that pitch of Devotion which others reached by cries and "hurlemens." And yet, whenever Wine, Wine-bearer, etc., occur in the text—which is often enough—Mons. Nicolas carefully annotates "Dieu," "La Divinite," etc; so carefully indeed that one is tempted to think that he was indoctrinated by the Sufi with whom he read the Poems. (Note to Rug. ii. p. 8.) A Persian would naturally wish to vindicate a distinguished Countryman; and a Sufi to enrol him on his own sect, which already comprises all the chief Poets of Persia.

What historical Authority has Mons. Nicolas to show that Omar gave himself up "*avec passion a l'etude de la philosophie des Soufis*"? (Preface, p. xiii.) The Doctrines of Pantheism, Materialism, Necessity, etc., were not peculiar to the Sufi; nor to Lucretius before them; nor to Epicurus before him; probably the very original Irreligion of Thinking men from the first; and very likely to be the spontaneous growth of a Philosopher living in an Age of social and political barbarism, under shadow of one of the Two and Seventy Reli-

gions supposed to divide the World. Von Hammer (according to Sprenger's Oriental Catalogue) speaks of Omar as "a Free-thinker, and a great opponent of Sufism;" perhaps because, while holding much of their Doctrine, he would not pretend to any inconsistent severity of morals. Sir W. Ouseley has written a note to something of the same effect on the fly-leaf of the Bodleian MS. And in two Rubaiyat of Mons. Nicolas' own Edition Suf and Sufi are both disparagingly named.

No doubt many of these Quatrains seem unaccountable unless mystically interpreted; but many more as unaccountable unless literally. Were the Wine spiritual, for instance, how wash the Body with it when dead! Why make cups of the dead clay to be filled with—"La Divinite"—by some succeeding Mystic? Mons. Nicolas himself is puzzled by some "bizarres" and "trop Orientales" allusions and images—"d'une sensualite quelquefois revolante" indeed—which "les convenances" do not permit him to translate; but still which the reader cannot but refer to "La Divinite."*

* A Note to Quatrain 234 admits that, however clear the mystical meaning of such Images must be to Europeans, they are not quoted without "rougissant" even by laymen in Persia—"Quant aux termes de tendresse qui commencent ce quatrain, comme tant d'autres dans ce recueil, nos lecteurs, habitues maintenant a l'etranger des expressions si souvent employes par Kheyam pour rendre ses pensees sur l'amour divin, et a la singularite de ses images trop orientales, d'une sensualite quelquefois revolante, n'auront pas de peine a se persuader qu'il s'agit de la Divinite, bien que cette conviction soit vivement discutee par les moullahs musulmans

No doubt also many of the Quatrains in the Teheran, as in the Calcutta Copies, are spurious; such *Rubaiyat* being the common form of Epigram in Persia. But this, at best, tells as much one way as another; nay, the Sufi, who may be considered the Scholar and Man of Letters in Persia, would be far more likely than the careless Epicure to interpolate what favors his own view of the Poet. I observe that very few of the more mystical Quatrains are in the Bodleian MS. which must be one of the oldest, as dated at Shiraz, A.H. 865, A.D. 1460. And this, I think, especially distinguishes Omar (I cannot help calling him by his—no, not Christian—familiar name) from all other Persian Poets: That, whereas with them the Poet is lost in his Song, the Man in Allegory and Abstraction; we seem to have the Man—the *Bonhomme*—Omar himself, with all his Humors and Passions, as frankly before us, as if we were really at table with him, after the wine had gone round.

I must say that I, for one, never wholly believed in the Mysticism of Hafiz. It does not appear there was any danger in holding and singing Sufi Pantheism, so long as the Poet made his Salaam to Mohammed at the beginning and end of his Song. Under such conditions Jelaluddin, Jami, Attar, and others sang; using Wine and Beauty indeed as Images to illustrate, not as a Mask to hide, the

et meme par beaucoup de laiques, qui rougissent veritablement d'une pareille licence de leur compatriote a l'egard des choses spirituelles."

Divinity they were celebrating. Perhaps some Allegory less liable to mistake or abuse had been better among so inflammable a People; much more so when, as some think with Hafiz and Omar, the abstract is not only likened to, but identified with, the sensual Image; hazardous, if not to the Devotee himself, yet to his weaker Brethren; and worse for the Profane in proportion as the Devotion of the Initiated grew warmer. And all for what? To be tantalized with Images of sensual enjoyment which must be renounced if one would approximate a God, who according to the Doctrine, is Sensual Matter as well as Spirit, and into whose Universe one expects unconsciously to merge after Death, without hope of any posthumous Beatitude in another world to compensate for all one's self-denial in this. Lucretius' blind Divinity certainly merited, and probably got, as much self-sacrifice as this of the Sufi; and the burden of Omar's song—if not "Let us eat"—is assuredly—"Let us drink, for To-morrow we die!" And if Hafiz meant quite otherwise by a similar language, he surely miscalculated when he devoted his Life and Genius to so equivocal a Psalmody as, from his Day to this, has been said and sung by any rather than Spiritual Worshipers.

However, as there is some traditional presumption, and certainly the opinion of some learned men, in favor of Omar's being a Sufi—and even something of a Saint—those who please may so interpret his Wine and Cup-bearer. On the other hand, as there is far

more historical certainty of his being a Philosopher, of scientific Insight and Ability far beyond that of the Age and Country he lived in; of such moderate worldly Ambition as becomes a Philosopher, and such moderate wants as rarely satisfy a Debauchee; other readers may be content to believe with me that, while the Wine Omar celebrates is simply the Juice of the Grape, he bragged more than he drank of it, in very defiance perhaps of that Spiritual Wine which left its Votaries sunk in Hypocrisy or Disgust.



RUBAIYAT

OF

OMAR KHAYYAM OF NAISHAPUR.

I.

Wake! For the Sun, who scatter'd into flight
The Stars before him from the Field of Night,
Drives Night along with them from Heav'n,
and strikes
The Sultan's Turret with a Shaft of Light.

II.

Before the phantom of False morning died,
Methought a Voice within the Tavern cried,
“When all the Temple is prepared within,
“Why nods the drowsy Worshipper outside?”

III.

And, as the Cock crew, those who stood before
The Tavern shouted—“Open then the Door!
“You know how little while we have to stay,
“And, once departed, may return no more.”

IV.

Now the New Year reviving old Desires,
The thoughtful Soul to Solitude retires,
Where the White Hand of Moses on the
Bough
Puts out, and Jesus from the Ground suspires.

V.

Iram indeed is gone with all his Rose,
And Jamshyd's Sev'n-ring'd Cup where no
one knows;
But still a Ruby kindles in the Vine,
And many a Garden by the Water blows.

VI.

And David's lips are lockt; but in divine
High-piping Pehlevi, with "Wine! Wine!
Wine!"
"Red Wine!"—the Nightingale cries to the
Rose
That sallow cheek of hers to' incarnadine.

VII.

Come, fill the Cup, and in the fire of Spring
Your Winter garment of Repentance fling:
The Bird of Time has but a little way
To flutter—and the Bird is on the Wing.

VIII.

Whether at Naishapur or Babylon,
Whether the Cup with sweet or bitter run,
The Wine of Life keeps oozing drop by drop,
The Leaves of Life keep falling one by one.

IX.

Each Morn a thousand Roses brings, you say:
Yes, but where leaves the Rose of Yesterday?
And this first Summer month that brings the
Rose
Shall take Jamshyd and Kaikobad away.

X.

Well, let it take them! What have we to do
With Kaikobad the Great, or Kaikhosru?
Let Zal and Rustum bluster as they will,
Or Hatim call to Supper—heed not you.

XI.

With me along the strip of Herbage strown
That just divides the desert from the sown,
Where name of Slave and Sultan is forgot—
And Peace to Mahmud on his golden Throne!

XII.

A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,
A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread—and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!

XIII.

Some for the Glories of This World; and some
Sigh for the Prophet's Paradise to come;
Ah, take the Cash, and let the Credit go,
Nor heed the rumble of a distant Drum!

XIV.

Look to the blowing Rose about us—"Lo,
"Laughing," she says, "into the world I blow,

"At once the silken tassel of my Purse
 "Tear, and its Treasure on the Garden throw."

XV.

And those who husbanded the Golden grain,
 And those who flung it to the winds like Rain.
 Alike to no such aureate Earth are turn'd
 As, buried once, Men want dug up again.

XVI.

The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon
 Turns Ashes—or it prospers; and anon,
 Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face,
 Lighting a little hour or two—is gone.

XVII.

Think, in this batter'd Caravanserai
 Whose Portals are alternate Night and Day,
 How Sultan after Sultan with his Pomp
 Abode his destined Hour, and went his way.

XVIII

They say the Lion and the Lizard keep
 The Courts where Jamshyd gloried and drank
 deep:
 And Bahram, that great Hunter—the Wild
 Ass
 Stamps o'er his Head, but cannot break his
 Sleep.

XIX.

I sometimes think that never blows so red
 The Rose as where some buried Cæsar bled;

That every Hyacinth the Garden wears
Dropt in her Lap from some once lovely Head.

XX.

And this reviving Herb whose tender Green
Fledges the River-Lip on which we lean—

Ah, lean upon it lightly! for who knows
From what once lovely Lip it springs unseen!

XXI.

Ah, my Beloved, fill the Cup that clears
To-day of past Regrets and future Fears:

To-morrow!—Why, To-morrow I may be
Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n thousand Years.

XXII.

For some we loved, the loveliest and the
best

That from his Vintage rolling Time hath
prest,

Have drunk their Cup a Round or two
before,

And one by one crept silently to rest.

XXIII.

And we, that now make merry in the Room

They left, and Summer dresses in new bloom,

Ourselves must we beneath the Couch of
Earth

Descend—ourselves to make a Couch—for
whom?

XXIV.

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
Before we too into the Dust descend;

Dust into Dust, and under Dust to lie,
Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and—sans
End!

xxv.

Alike for those who for To-day prepare,
And those that after some To-morrow stare,
A Muezzin from the Tower of Darkness
cries,
“Fools! your Reward is neither Here nor
There.”

xxvi.

Why, all the Saints and Sages who discuss'd
Of the Two Worlds so wisely—they are thrust,
Like foolish Prophets, forth; their Words to
Scorn
Are scatter'd, and their Mouths are stopt with
Dust.

xxvii.

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and Saint, and heard great argument
About it and about: but evermore
Came out by the same door where in I went.

xxviii.

With them the seed of Wisdom did I sow,
And with mine own hand wrought to make it
grow;
And this was all the Harvest that I reap'd—
“I came like Water, and like Wind I go.”

XXIX.

Into this Universe, and Why not knowing
Nor Whence, like Water willy-nilly flowing;
And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
I knew not Whither, willy-nilly blowing.

XXX.

What, without asking, hither hurried Whence?
And, without asking, Whither hurried hence!
Oh, many a Cup of this forbidden Wine
Must drown the memory of that insolence!

XXXI.

Up from Earth's Center through the Seventh
Gate
I rose, and on the Throne of Saturn sate,
And many a Knot unravel'd by the Road;
But not the Master-knot of Human Fate.

XXXII.

There was the Door to which I found no Key;
There was the Veil through which I might not
see:
Some little talk awhile of Me and Thee
There was—and then no more of Thee and Me.

XXXIII.

Earth could not answer; nor the Seas that
mourn
In flowing Purple, of their Lord forlorn;
Nor rolling Heaven, with all his Signs re-
veal'd
And hidden by the sleeve of Night and Morn.

XXXIV.

Then of the Thee in Me who works behind
The Veil, I lifted up my hands to find
A lamp amid the Darkness; and I heard,
As from Without—"The Me within Thee
blind!"

XXXV.

Then to the Lip of his poor earthen Urn
I lean'd, the Secret of my Life to learn:
And Lip to Lip it murmur'd—"While you
live,
"Drink!—for, once dead, you never shall
return."

XXXVI.

I think the Vessel, that with fugitive
Articulation answer'd, once did live,
And drink; and Ah! the passive Lip I kiss'd,
How many Kisses might it take—and give!

XXXVII.

For I remember stopping by the way
To watch a Potter thumping his wet Clay;
And with its all-obiterated Tongue
It murmur'd—"Gently, Brother, gently, pray!"

XXXVIII.

And has not such a Story from of Old
Down Man's successive generations roll'd
Of such a clod of saturated Earth
Cast by the Maker into Human mould?

XXXIX.

And not a drop that from our Cups we throw
For Earth to drink of, but may steal below
To quench the fire of Anguish in some Eye
There hidden—far beneath, and long ago.

XL.

As then the Tulip for her morning sup
Of Heav'nly Vintage from the soil looks up,
Do you devoutly do the like, till Heav'n
To Earth invert you—like an empty Cup.

XLI.

Perplexed no more with Human or Divine,
To-morrow's tangle to the winds resign,
And lose your fingers in the tresses of
The Cypress-slender Minister of Wine.

XLII.

And if the Wine you drink, the Lip you press,
End in what All begins and ends in—Yes;
Think then you are To-day what Yesterday
You were—To-morrow you shall not be less.

XLIII.

So when that Angel of the darker Drink
At last shall find you by the river-brink,
And, offering his Cup, invite your Soul
Forth to your Lips to quaff—you shall not
shrink.

XLIV.

Why, if the Soul can fling the Dust aside,
And naked on the Air of Heaven ride,

Were't not a Shame—were't not a Shame for
him
In this clay carcase crippled to abide?

XLV.

'Tis but a Tent where takes his one day's rest
A Sultan to the realm of Death addrest;
The Sultan rises, and the dark Ferrash
Strikes, and prepares it for another Guest.

XLVI.

And fear not lest Existence closing your
Account, and mine, should know the like no
more;
The Eternal Saki from that Bowl has pour'd
Millions of Bubbles like us, and will pour.

XLVII.

When You and I behind the Veil are past,
Oh, but the long, long while the World shall
last,
Which of our Coming and Departure heeds
As the Sea's self should heed a pebble-cast.

XLVIII.

A Moment's Halt—a momentary taste
Of Being from the Well amid the Waste—
And Lo!—the phantom Caravan has reach'd
The Nothing it set out from—Oh, make haste!

XLIX.

Would you that spangle of Existence spend
About the secret—quick about it, Friend!

A Hair perhaps divides the False and True—
And upon what, prithee, may life depend?

L.

A Hair perhaps divides the False and True;
Yes; and a single Alif were the clue—
Could you but find it—to the Treasure-house,
And peradventure to The Master, too;

LI.

Whose secret Presence, through Creation's
veins
Running Quicksilver-like eludes your pains;
Taking all shapes from Mah to Mahi; and
They change and perish all—but He remains;

LII.

A moment guess'd—then back behind the Fold
Immerst of Darkness round the Drama roll'd
Which, for the Pastime of Eternity,
He doth Himself contrive, enact, behold.

LIII.

But if in vain, down on the stubborn floor
Of Earth, and up to Heav'n's unopening Door,
You gaze To-day, while You are You—how
then
To-morrow, when You shall be You no more?

LIV.

Waste not your Hour, nor in the vain pursuit
Of This and That endeavour and dispute;
Better be jocund with the fruitful Grape
Than sadden after none, or bitter, Fruit.

LV.

You know, my Friends, with what a brave
 Carouse
 I made a Second Marriage in my house;
 Divorced old barren Reason from my Bed,
 And took the Daughter of the Vine to Spouse.

LVI.

For "Is" and "Is-not" though with Rule and
 Line
 And "Up-and-down" by Logic I define,
 Of all that one should care to fathom, I
 Was never deep in anything but—Wine.

LVII.

Ah, but my Computations, People say,
 Reduced the Year to better reckoning?—Nay,
 'Twas only striking from the Calendar
 Unborn 'To-morrow and dead Yesterday.

LVIII.

And lately, by the Tavern Door agape,
 Came shining through the Dusk an Angel
 Shape
 Bearing a Vessel on his Shoulder; and
 He bid me taste of it; and 'twas—the Grape!

LIX.

The Grape that can with Logic absolute
 The Two-and-Seventy jarring Sects confute;
 The sovereign Alchemist that in a trice
 Life's leaden metal into Gold transmute:

LX.

The mighty Mahmud, Allah-breathing Lord,
That all the misbelieving and black Horde
Of Fears and Sorrows that infest the Soul
Scatters before him with his whirlwind Sword.

LXI.

Why, be this Juice the growth of God, who
dare
Blaspheme the twisted tendril as a Snare?
A Blessing, we should use it, should we not?
And if a Curse—why, then, Who set it there?

LXII.

I must abjure the Balm of Life, I must,
Scared by some After-reckoning ta'en on trust,
Or lured with Hope of some Diviner Drink,
To fill the Cup—when crumbled into Dust!

LXIII.

Oh threats of Hell and Hopes of Paradise!
One thing at least is certain—This Life flies;
One thing is certain and the rest is Lies:
The Flower that once has blown for ever dies.

LXIV.

Strange, is it not? that of the myriads who
Before us pass'd the door of Darkness through,
Not one returns to tell us of the Road,
Which to discover we must travel, too.

LXV.

The Revelations of Devout and Learn'd
Who rose before us, and as Prophets burn'd,

Are all but Stories, which, awoke from Sleep
They told their comrades, and to Sleep return'd.

LXVI.

I sent my Soul through the Invisible,
Some letter of that After-life to spell:
And by and by my Soul return'd to me,
And answer'd, "I Myself am Heav'n and Hell:"

LXVII.

Heav'n but the Vision of fulfill'd Desire,
And Hell the Shadow from a Soul on fire,
Cast on the Darkness into which Ourselves,
So late emerged from, shall so soon expire.

LXVIII.

We are no other than a moving row
Of Magic Shadow-shapes that come and go
Round with the Sun-illumin'd Lantern held
In Midnight by the Master of the Show;

LXIX.

But helpless Pieces of the Game He plays
Upon this Chequer-board of Nights and Days;
Hither and thither moves, and checks, and
slays,
And one by one back in the Closet lays.

LXX.

The Ball no question makes of Ayes and Noes,
But Here or There as strikes the Player goes;
And He that toss'd you down into the Field,
He knows about it all—He knows—He knows!

LXXI.

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit

Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it.

LXXII.

And that inverted Bowl they call the Sky,
Whereunder crawling coop'd we live and die,

Lift not your hands to It for help—for It
As impotently moves as you or I.

LXXIII.

With Earth's first Clay They did the Last Man
knead,

And there of the Last Harvest sow'd the Seed;

And the first Morning of Creation wrote
What the Last Dawn of Reckoning shall read.

LXXIV.

Yesterday This Day's Madness did prepare;
To-morrow's Silence, Triumph, or Despair:

Drink! for you know not whence you came,
nor why:

Drink! for you know not why you go, nor
where.

LXXV.

I tell you this—When, started from the Goal,
Over the flaming shoulders of the Foal

Of Heav'n Parwin and Mushtari they flung,
In my predestined Plot of Dust and Soul

LXXVI.

The Vine had struck a fibre: which about
If clings my Being—let the Dervish flout;
Of my Base metal may be filed a Key
That shall unlock the Door he howls without.

LXXVII.

And this I know: whether the one True Light
Kindle to Love, or Wrath-consume me quite,
One Flash of It within the Tavern caught
Better than in the Temple lost outright.

LXXVIII.

What! out of senseless Nothing to provoke
A conscious Something to resent the yoke
Of unpermitted Pleasure, under pain
Of Everlasting Penalties, if broke!

LXXIX.

What! from his helpless Creature be repaid
Pure Gold for what he lent him dross-allay'd—
Sue for a Debt he never did contract,
And cannot answer—Oh the sorry trade!

LXXX.

Oh Thou, who didst with pitfall and with gin
Beset the Road I was to wander in,
Thou wilt not with Predestined Evil round
Enmesh, and then impute my Fall to Sin!

LXXXI.

Oh Thou, who Man of baser Earth didst make,
And ev'n with Paradise devise the Snake:

For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man
Is blacken'd — Man's forgiveness give—and
take!

* * * * *

LXXXII.

As under cover of departing Day
Slunk hunger-stricken Ramazan away,
Once more within the Potter's house alone
I stood, surrounded by the Shapes of Clay.

LXXXIII. *do*

Shapes of all Sorts and Sizes, great and small,
That stood along the floor and by the wall;
And some loquacious Vessels were; and some
Listen'd perhaps, but never talk'd at all.

LXXXIV.

Said one among them—"Surely not in vain
"My substance of the common Earth was ta'en
"And to this Figure moulded, to be broke,
"Or trampled back to shapeless Earth again."

LXXXV.

Then said a Second—"Ne'er a peevish Boy
"Would break the Bowl from which he drank
in joy;
"And He that with his hand the Vessel made
"Will surely not in after Wrath destroy."

LXXXVI.

After a momentary silence spake
Some Vessel of a more ungainly Make;
"They sneer at me for leaning all awry;

"What! did the Hand then of the Potter
shake?"

LXXXVII.

Whereat some one of the loquacious Lot—
I think a Sufi pipkin—waxing hot—

"All this of Pot and Potter—Tell me, then,
"Who is the Potter, pray, and who the Pot?"

LXXXVIII.

"Why," said another, "Some there are who
tell

"Of one who threatens he will toss to Hell
"The luckless Pots he marr'd in making—
Pish!

"He's a Good Fellow, and 'twill all be well."

LXXXIX.

"Well," murmur'd one, "Let whoso make or
buy,

"My Clay with long Oblivion is gone dry:

"But fill me with the old familiar Juice,
"Methinks I might recover by and by."

XC.

So while the Vessels ony by one were speak-
ing,

The little Moon look'd in that all were seek-
ing:

And then they jogg'd each other, "Brother!
Brother!

"Now for the Potter's shoulder-knot a-creak-
ing!"

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XCI.

Ah, with the Grape my fading life provide,
And wash the Body whence the Life has died,
And lay me, shrouded in the living Leaf,
By some not unfrequented Garden-side.

XCII.

That ev'n my buried Ashes such a snare
Of Vintage shall fling up into the Air
As not a True-believer passing by
But shall be overtaken unaware.

XCIII.

Indeed the Idols I have loved so long
Have done my credit in this World much
wrong:
Have drown'd my Glory in a shallow Cup,
And sold my Reputation for a Song.

XCIV.

Indeed, indeed, Repentance oft before
I swore—but was I sober when I swore?
And then and then came Spring, and Rose-in-
hand
My thread-bare Penitence apieces tore.

XCV.

And much as Wine has play'd the Infidel,
And robb'd me of my Robe of Honour—Well,
I wonder often what the Vintners buy
One-half so precious as the stuff they sell.

XCVI.

Yet Ah, that Spring should vanish with the
Rose!

That Youth's sweet-scented manuscript should
close!

The Nightingale that in the branches sang,
Ah whence, and whither flown again, who
knows!

XCVII.

Would but the Desert of the Fountain yield
One glimpse—if dimly, yet, indeed, reveal'd,
To which the fainting Traveler might spring,
As springs the trampled herbage of the field!

XCVIII.

Would but some winged Angel ere too late
Arrest the yet unfolded Roll of Fate,
And make the stern Recorder otherwise
Enregister, or quite obliterate!

XCIX.

Ah Love! could you and I with Him conspire
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
Would not we shatter it to bits—and then
Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's Desire!

* * * * *

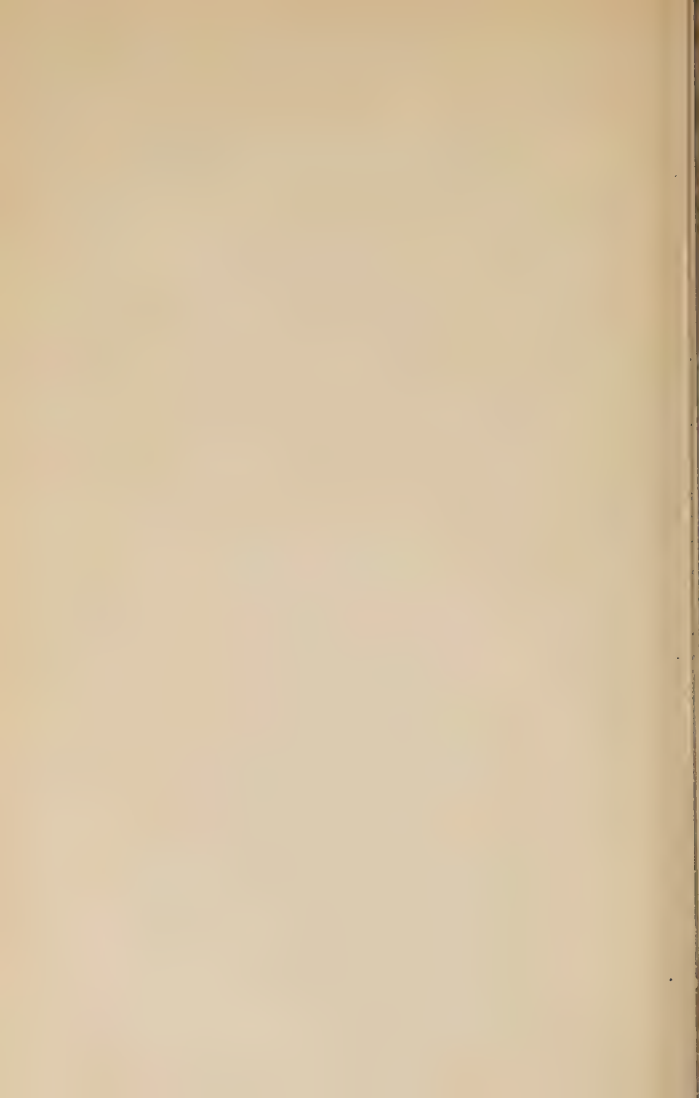
C.

Yon rising Moon that looks for us again—
How oft hereafter will she wax and wane;
How oft hereafter rising look for us
Through this same Garden—and for one in
vain!

CI.

And when like her, oh Saki, you shall pass
Among the Guests Star-scatter'd on the Grass,
And in your joyous errand reach the spot
Where I made One—turn down an empty
Glass!

TAMAM.



NOTES.

(Stanza 11.) The "False Dawn;" *Subhi Kazib*, a transient Light on the Horizon about an hour before the *Subhi sadik*, or True Dawn; a well-known Phenomenon in the East.

(iv.) New Year. Beginning with the Vernal Equinox, it must be remembered; and (howsoever the old Solar Year is practically superseded by the clumsy Lunar Year that dates from the Mohammedan Hijra) still commemorated by a Festival that is said to have been appointed by the very Jamshyd whom Omar so often talks of, and whose yearly Calendar he helped to rectify.

"The sudden approach and rapid advance of the Spring," says Mr. Binning,* "are very striking. Before the Snow is well off the Ground, the Trees burst forth into Blossom, and the Flowers start forth from the Soil. At *Now Rooz* [their New Year's Day] the Snow was lying in patches on the Hills and in the shaded Vallies, while the Fruit-trees in the Gardens were budding beautifully, and green Plants and Flowers springing up on the Plains on every side—

*Two Years' Travel in Persia, etc., i. 165.

'And on old Hyems' Chin and icy Crown
 'An odorous Chaplet of sweet Summer buds
 'Is, as in mockery, set.'—

Among the Plants newly appeared I recognized some old Acquaintances I had not seen for many a Year; among these, two varieties of the Thistle—a coarse species of Daisy like the 'Horse-gowan'—red and white Clover—the Dock—the blue Cornflower—and that vulgar Herb the Dandelion rearing its yellow crest on the Banks of the Water-courses." The Nightingale was not yet heard, for the Rose was not yet blown; but an almost identical Blackbird and Woodpecker helped to make up something of a North-country Spring.

"The White Hand of Moses." Exodus iv, 6; where Moses draws forth his Hand—not, according to the Persians, "leprous as Snow,"—but white, as our May-blossom in Spring perhaps. According to them also the Healing Power of Jesus resided in his Breath.

(v.) Iram, planted by King Shaddad, and now sunk somewhere in the Sands of Arabia. Jamshyd's Seven-ring'd Cup was typical of the 7 Heavens, 7 Planets, 7 Seas, etc., and was a Divining Cup.

(vi.) Pehlevi, the old Heroic Sanskrit of Persia. Hafiz also speaks of the Nightingale's Pehlevi, which did not change with the People's.

I am not sure if the fourth line refers to the Red Rose looking sickly, or to the Yellow Rose that ought to be Red; Red, White, and Yellow Roses all common in Persia. I think that

Southey, in his Common-Place Book, quotes from some Spanish author about the Rose being White till 10 o'clock; "Rosa Perfecta" at 2; and "perfecta incarnada" at 5.

(x.) Rustum, the "Hercules" of Persia, and Zal his Father, whose exploits are among the most celebrated in the Shahnama. Hatim Tai, a well-known type of Oriental Generosity.

(xiii.) A Drum—beaten outside a Palace.

(xiv.) That is, the Rose's Golden Center.

(xviii.) Persepolis: call'd also Takht-i-Jamshyd—The Throne of Jamshyd, "King Splendid," of the mythical Peshdadian Dynasty, and supposed (according to the Shahnama) to have been founded and built by him. Others refer it to the Work of the Genie King, Jan Ibn Jan—who also built the Pyramids—before the time of Adam.

Bahram Gur—Bahram of the Wild Ass—a Sassanian Sovereign—had also his Seven Castles (like the King of Bohemia!) each of a different Colour: each with a Royal Mistress within; each of whom tells him a Story, as told in one of the most famous Poems of Persia, written by Amir Khusraw: all these Sevens also figuring (according to Eastern Mysticism) the Seven Heavens; and perhaps the Book itself that Eighth, in to which the mystical Seven transcend, and within which they revolve. The Ruins of Three of those Towers are yet shown by the Peasantry; as also the Swamp in which Bahram sunk, like the Master of Ravenswood, while pursuing his Gur.

The Palace that to Heav'n his pillars threw,
 And Kings the forehead on his threshold drew—
 I saw the solitary Ringdove there,
 And "Coo, coo, coo," she cried; and "Coo, coo, coo."

This Quatrain Mr. Binning found, among several of Hafiz and others, inscribed by some stray hand among the ruins of Persepolis. The Ringdove's ancient Pehlevi Coo, Coo, Coo, signifies also in Persian "Where? Where? Where?" In Attar's "Bird-parliament" she is reproved by the Leader of the Birds for sitting still, and for ever harping on that one note of lamentation for her lost Yusuf.

Apropos of Omar's Red Roses in Stanza xix, I am reminded of an old English Superstition, that our Anemone Pulsatilla, or purple "Pasque Flower" (which grows plentifully about the Fleam Dyke, near Cambridge), grows only where Danish Blood has been spilt.

(xxi.) A thousand years to each Planet.

(xxxI.) Saturn, Lord of the Seventh Heaven.

(xxxII.) Me-and-Thee: some dividual Existence or Personality distinct from the Whole.

(xxxvII.) One of the Persian Poets—Attar, I think—has a pretty story about this. A thirsty Traveler dips his hand into a Spring of Water to drink from. By-and-by comes another who draws up and drinks from an earthen Bowl, and then departs, leaving his Bowl behind him. The first Traveler takes it up for another draught but is surprised to find that the same Water which had tasted

sweet from his own hand tastes bitter from the earthen Bowl. But a Voice—from Heaven, I think—tells him the clay from which the Bowl is made was once Man; and, into whatever shape renewed, can never lose the bitter flavor of Mortality.

(xxxix.) The custom of throwing a little Wine on the ground before drinking still continues in Persia, and perhaps generally in the East. Mons. Nicolas considers it “un signe de liberalite, et en meme temps un avertissement que le buveur doit vider sa coupe jusqu’a la derniere goutte.” Is it not more likely an ancient Superstition; a Libation to propitiate Earth, or make her an Accomplice in the illicit Revel? Or, perhaps, to divert the Jealous Eye by some sacrifice of superfluity, as with the Ancients of the West? With Omar we see something more is signified; the precious Liquor is not lost, but sinks into the ground to refresh the dust of some poor Wine-worshiper foregone.

Thus Hafiz, copying Omar in so many ways: “When thou drinkest Wine pour a draught on the ground. Wherefore fear the Sin which brings to another Gain?”

(xlIII.) According to one beautiful Oriental Legend, Azrael accomplishes his mission by holding to the nostril an Apple from the Tree of Life.

This and the two following Stanzas would have been withdrawn, as somewhat *de trop*, from the Text, but for advice which I least like to disregard.

(LI.) From Mah to Mahi; from Fish to Moon.

(LVI.) A Jest, of course, at his Studies. A curious mathematical Quatrain of Omar's has been pointed out to me; the more curious because almost exactly parallel'd by some Verses of Doctor Donne's, that are quoted in Izaak Walton's Lives! Here is Omar: "You and I are the image of a pair of compasses; though we have two heads (sc. our feet) we have one body; when we have fixed the center for our circle, we bring our heads (sc. feet) together at the end." Dr. Donne:

If we be two, we two are so
As stiff twin-compasses are two;
Thy Soul, the fixt foot, makes no show
To move, but does if the other do.

And though thine in the center sit,
Yet when my other far does roam,
Thine leans and hearkens after it,
And grows erect as mine comes home.

Such thou must be to me, who must
Like the other foot obliquely run;
Thy firmness makes my circle just,
And me to end where I begun.

(LIX.) The Seventy-two Religions supposed to divide the World, including Islamism, as some think: but others not.

(LX.) Alluding to Sultan Mahmud's Conquest of India and its dark people.

(LXVIII.) *Fanusi khijal*, a Magic-lantern still used in India; the cylindrical Interior being painted with various Figures, and so lightly

poised and ventilated as to revolve round the lighted Candle within.

(Lxx.) A very mysterious Line in the Original:

O danad O danad O danad O——

breaking off something like our Wood-pigeon's Note, which she is said to take up just where she left off.

(Lxxv.) Parwin and Mushtari—The Pleiads and Jupiter.

(Lxxxvii.) This Relation of Pot and Potter to Man and his Maker figures far and wide in the Literature of the World, from the time of the Hebrew Prophets to the present; when it may finally take the name of "Pot theism," by which Mr. Carlyle ridiculed Sterling's "Pantheism." My Sheikh, whose knowledge flows in from all quarters, writes to me—

"Apropos of old Omar's Pots, did I ever tell you the sentence I found in 'Bishop Pearson on the Creed'? 'Thus are we wholly at the disposal of His will, and our present and future condition framed and ordered by His free, but wise and just, decrees. Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? (Rom. ix. 21.) And can that earth-artificer have a freer power over his brother potsherd (both being made of the same metal), than God hath over him, who, by the strange fecundity of His omnipotent power, first made the clay out of nothing, and then him out of that?' "

And again—from a very different quarter—
 “I had to refer the other day to Aristophanes,
 and came by chance on a curious Speaking-pot
 story in the Vespæ, which I had quite for-
 gotten.

Φιλοκλέων. Ἄκουε, μὴ·φεῦγ· ἐν Συβάρει γυνή
 ποτε l. 1435

κατέαξ ἑχῖνον.

Κατήγορος. Ταῦτ' ἐγὼ μαρτύρομαι
 Φι. Οὐχίνος οὖν ἔχων τιν' ἐπεμαρτύρατο·
 Εἰθ' ἡ Συβαρίτις εἶπεν, εἰ ναὶ τὰν
 κόραν
 τὴν μαρτυρίαν ταύτην ἔασας, ἐν τάχει
 ἐπίδεσμον ἐπρίω, νοῦν ἂν εἶχες πλείονα.

“The Pot calls a bystander to be a witness
 to his bad treatment. The woman says, ‘If,
 by Proserpine, instead of all this ‘testifying’
 (comp. Cuddie and his mother in ‘Old Mor-
 tality!’) you would buy yourself a rivet, it
 would show more sense in you!’ The Schol-
 iast explains *echinus* as ἄγγος τι ἐκ κεράμου.”

One more illustration for the oddity's sake
 from the “Autobiography of a Cornish Rec-
 tor,” by the late James Hamley Tregenna.
 1871.

“There was one old Fellow in our Company
 —he was so like a Figure in the ‘Pilgrim's
 Progress’ that Richard always called him the
 Allegory,’ with a long white beard—a rare
 Appendage in those days—and a Face the

color of which seemed to have been baked in, like the Faces one used to see on Earthenware Jugs. In our Country-dialect Earthenware is called '*Clome*'; so the Boys of the Village used to shout out after him—'Go back to the Potter, old Clome-face, and get baked over again.' For the '*Allegory*,' though shrewd enough in most things, had the reputation of being '*saiſt-baked*,' i.e., of weak intellect."

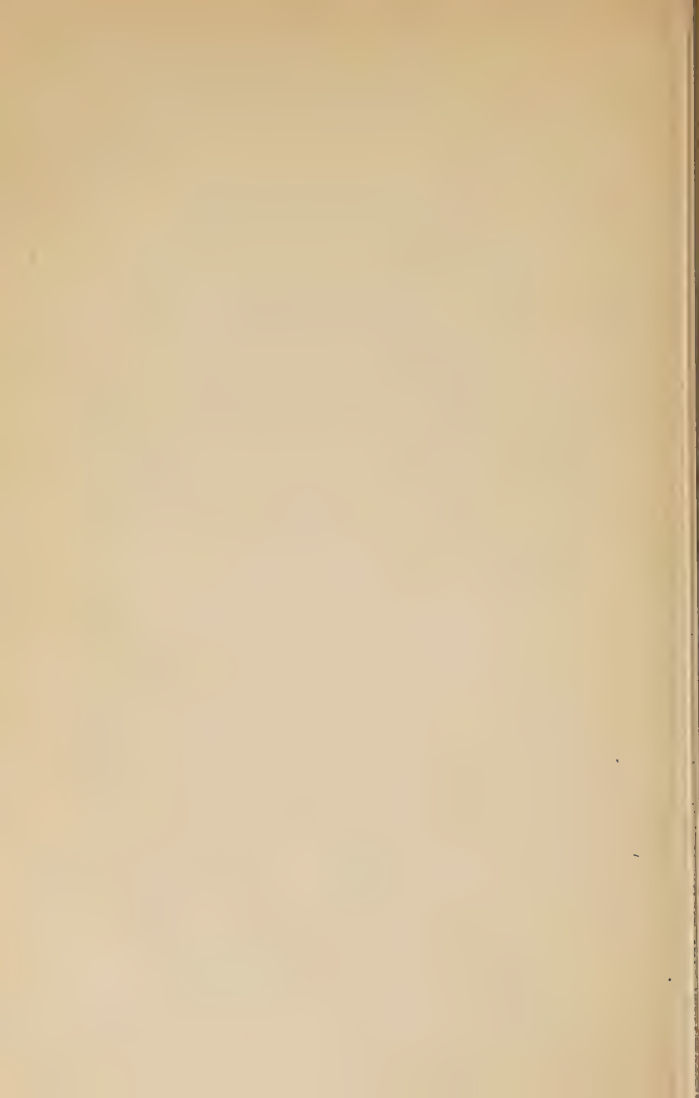
(xc.) At the Close of the Fasting Month, Ramazan (which makes the Musulman unhealthy and unamiable), the first Glimpse of the New Moon (who rules their division of the Year), is looked for with the utmost Anxiety, and hailed with Acclamation. Then it is that the Porter's Knot may be heard—toward the Cellar. Omar has elsewhere a pretty Quatrain about the same Moon—

"Be of Good Cheer—the sullen Month will die,

"And a young Moon requite us by and by:

"Look how the Old one meagre, bent, and wan

"With Age and Fast, is fainting from the Sky!"



[The first Edition of the translation of Omar Khayyam, which appeared in 1859, differs so much from those which followed, that it has been thought better to print it in full, instead of attempting to record the differences.]

I.

Awake! for Morning in the Bowl of Night
Has flung the Stone that puts the Stars to
Flight:

And Lo! the Hunter of the East has caught
The Sultan's Turret in a Noose of Light.

II.

Dreaming when Dawn's Left Hand was in the
Sky

I heard a Voice within the Tavern cry,

"Awake, my Little ones, and fill the Cup
"Before Life's Liquor in its Cup be dry."

III.

And, as the Cock crew, those who stood before
The Tavern shouted—"Open then the Door!

"You know how little while we have to stay,
"And, once departed, may return no more."

IV.

Now the New Year reviving old Desires,
The thoughtful Soul to Solitude retires,

Where the White Hand of Moses on the
 Bough
 Puts out, and Jesus from the Ground suspires.

v.

Iram indeed is gone with all its Rose,
 And Jamshyd's Sev'n-ring'd Cup where no one
 knows;
 But still the Vine her ancient Ruby yields,
 And still a Garden by the Water blows.

vi.

And David's Lips are lock't; but in divine
 High piping Pehlevi, with "Wine! Wine!
 Wine!"
 "Red Wine!"—the Nightingale cries to the
 Rose
 That yellow Cheek of her's to'incarnadine.

vii.

Come, fill the Cup, and in the Fire of Spring
 The Winter Garment of Repentance fling:
 The Bird of Time has but a little way
 To fly—and Lo! the Bird is on the Wing.

viii.

And look—a thousand Blossoms with the Day
 Woke—and a thousand scatter'd into Clay:
 And this first Summer Month that brings the
 Rose
 Shall take Jamshyd and Kaikobad away.

IX.

But come with old Khayyam, and leave the Lot
O Kaikobad and Kaikhosru forgot!

Let Rustum lay about him as he will,
Or Hatim Tai cry Supper—heed them not.

X.

With me along some Strip of Herbage strown
That just divides the desert from the sown,

Where name of Slave and Sultan scarce is
known,
And pity Sultan Mahmud on his Throne.

XI.

Here with a Loaf of Bread beneath the Bough,
A Flask of Wine, a Book of Verse—and Thou

Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
And Wilderness is Paradise enow.

XII.

“How sweet is mortal Sovranty!”—think
some:

Others—“How blest the Paradise to come!”

Ah, take the Cash in hand and wave the
Rest;

Oh, the brave Music of a distant Drum!

XIII.

Look to the Rose that blows about us—“Lo,
“Laughing,” she says, “into the World I blow:

“At once the silken Tassel of my Purse
“Tear, and its Treasure on the Garden
throw.”

XIV.

The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon
 Turns ashes—or it prospers; and anon,
 Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face
 Lighting a little Hour or two— is gone.

XV.

And those who husbanded the Golden Grain,
 And those who flung it to the Winds like
 Rain,
 Alike to no such aureate Earth are turn'd
 As, buried once, Men want dug up again.

XVI.

Think, in this batter'd Caravanserai
 Whose Doorways are alternate Night and Day,
 How Sultan after Sultan with his Pomp
 Abode his Hour or two, and went his way.

XVII.

They say the Lion and the Lizard keep
 The Courts where Jamshyd gloried and drank
 deep;
 And Bahram, that great Hunter—the Wild
 Ass
 Stamps o'er his Head, and he lies fast asleep.

XVIII.

I sometimes think that never blows so red
 The Rose as where some buried Cæsar bled;
 That every Hyacinth the Garden wears
 Dropt in its Lap from some once lovely Head.

XIX.

And this delightful Herb whose tender Green
Fledges the River's Lip on which we lean—

Ah, lean upon it lightly! for who knows
From what once lovely Lip it springs unseen!

XX.

Ah, my Beloved, fill the Cup that clears
To-day of past Regrets and future Fears—

To-morrow?—Why, To-morrow I may be
Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n Thousand
Years.

XXI.

Lo! some we loved, the loveliest and best
That Time and Fate of all their Vintage prest,
Have drunk their Cup a Round or two be-
fore,

And one by one crept silently to Rest.

XXII.

And we, that now make merry in the Room
They left, and Summer dresses in new Bloom,
Ourselves must we beneath the Couch of
Earth

Descend, ourselves to make a Couch—for
whom?

XXIII.

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
Before we too into the Dust descend;

Dust into Dust, and under Dust, to lie,
Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and—sans
End!

XXIV.

Alike for those who for To-day prepare,
And those that after a To-morrow stare,
A Muezzin from the Tower of Darkness cries
"Fools! your Reward is neither Here nor
There!"

XXV.

Why, all the Saints and Sages who discuss'd
Of the Two Worlds so learnedly, are thrust
Like foolish Prophets forth; their Words to
Scorn
Are scatter'd, and their Mouths are stopt with
Dust.

XXVI.

Oh, come with old Khayyam, and leave the
Wise
To talk; one thing is certain, that Life flies;
One thing is certain, and the Rest is Lies;
The Flower that once has blown forever dies.

XXVII.

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and Saint, and heard great Argument
About it and about; but evermore
Came out by the same Door as in I went.

XXVIII.

With them the Seed of Wisdom did I sow,
And with my own hand labor'd it to grow;
And this was all the Harvest that I reap'd—
"I came like Water, and like Wind I go."



"Ah, that Spring should vanish with the rose."—Page 62.
Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam.



XXIX.

Into this Universe, and why not knowing,
Nor whence, like Water willy-nilly flowing:
And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
I know not whither, willy-nilly blowing.

XXX.

What, without asking, hither hurried whence?
And, without asking, whither hurried hence!
Another and another Cup to drown
The Memory of this Impertinence!

XXXI.

Up from Earth's Center through the Seventh
Gate
I rose, and on the Throne of Saturn sate,
And many Knots unravel'd by the Road;
But not the Knot of Human Death and Fate.

XXXII.

There was a Door to which I found no Key:
There was a Veil past which I could not see:
Some little Talk awhile of Me and Thee
There seem'd—and then no more of Thee and
Me.

XXXIII.

Then to the rolling Heav'n itself I cried,
Asking, "What Lamp had Destiny to guide
"Her little Children stumbling in the Dark?"
And "A blind Understanding! Heav'n replied.

XXXIV.

Then to this earthen Bowl did I adjourn
My Lip the secret Well of Life to learn:

And Lip to Lip it murmur'd—"While you
live
"Drink!—for once: dead you never shall re-
turn."

XXXV.

I think the Vessel, that with fugitive
Articulation answer'd, once did live,

And merry-make; and the cold Lip I kiss'd
How many Kisses might it take—and give!

XXXVI.

For in the Market-place, one Dusk of Day,
I watch'd the Potter thumping his wet Clay:
And with its all obliterated Tongue
It murmur'd—"Gently, Brother, gently, pray!"

XXXVII.

Ah, fill the Cup:—what boots it to repeat
How Time is slipping underneath our Feet:
Unborn To-morrow, and dead Yesterday,
Why fret about them if To-day be sweet!

XXXVIII.

One Moment in Annihilation's Waste,
One Moment, of the Well of Life to taste—

The Stars are setting and the Caravan
Starts for the Dawn of Nothing—Oh, make
haste!

XXXIX.

How long, how long, in infinite Pursuit
Of This and That endeavor and dispute?
Better be merry with the fruitful Grape
Than sadden after none, or bitter, Fruit.

XL.

You know, my Friends, how long since in my
House
For a new Marriage I did make Carouse:
Divorced old barren Reason from my Bed,
And took the Daughter of the Vine to Spouse.

XLI.

For "Is" and "Is-not" though with Rule and
Line,
And "Up-and-down" without, I could define,
I yet in all I only cared to know,
Was never deep in anything but—Wine.

XLII.

And lately, by the Tavern Door agape,
Came stealing through the Dusk an Angel
Shape
Bearing a Vessel on his Shoulder; and
He bid me taste of it; and 'twas—the Grape!

XLIII.

The Grape that can with Logic absolute
The Two-and-Seventy jarring Sects confute:
The subtle Alchemist that in a Trice
Life's leaden Metal into Gold transmute.

XLIV.

The mighty Mahmud, the victorious Lord,
That all the misbelieving and black Horde
Of Fears and Sorrows that infest the Soul
Scatters and slays with his enchanted Sword.

XLV.

But leave the Wise to wrangle, and with me
The Quarrel of the Universe let be:
And, in some corner of the Hubbub coucht,
Make Game of that which makes as much of
Thee.

XLVI.

For in and out, above, about, below,
'Tis nothing but a Magic Shadow-show,
Play'd in a Box whose Candle is the Sun,
Round which we Phantom Figures come and
go.

XLVII.

And if the Wine you drink, the Lip you press,
End in the Nothing all Things end in—Yes—
Then fancy while Thou art, Thou art but
what
Thou shalt be—Nothing—Thou shalt not be
less.

XLVIII.

While the Rose blows along the River Brink,
With old Khayyam the Ruby Vintage drink:
And when the Angel with his darker Draught
Draws up to Thee—take that, and do not
shrink.

XLIX.

'Tis all a Chequer-board of Nights and Days
Where Destiny with Men for Pieces plays:
Hither and thither moves, and mates, and
slays.
And one by one back in the Closet lays.

L.

The Ball no Question makes of Ayes and Noes,
But Right or Left, as strikes the Player goes;
And He that toss'd Thee down into the
Field,
He knows about it all—He knows—He knows!

LI.

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
Moves on: nor all thy Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word of it.

LII.

And that inverted Bowl we call The Sky,
Where under crawling coop't we live and die,
Lift not thy hands to It for help—for It
Rolls impotently on as Thou or I.

LIII.

With Earth's first Clay They did the Last
Man's knead,
And then of the Last Harvest sow'd the Seed:
Yea, the first Morning of Creation wrote
What the Last Dawn of Reckoning shall read.

LIV.

I tell Thee this—When, starting from the
 Goal,
 O'er the shoulders of the flaming Foal
 Of Heav'n Parwin and Mushtara they flung,
 In my predestin'd Plot of Dust and Soul

LV.

The Vine had struck a Fibre; which about
 If clings my Being—let the Sufi flout;
 Of my Base Metal may be filed a Key,
 That shall unlock the Door he howls without.

LVI.

And this I know: whether the one True light,
 Kindle to Love, or Wrath consume me quite,
 One Glimpse of It within the Tavern caught
 Better than in the Temple lost outright.

LVII.

Oh, Thou, who didst with Pitfall and with Gin
 Beset the Road I was to wander in,
 Thou wilt not with Predestination round
 Enmesh me, and impute my Fall to Sin?

LVIII.

Oh, Thou, who Man of baser Earth didst
 make,
 And who with Eden didst devise the Snake;
 For all the Sin where with the Face of Man
 Is blacken'd, Man's Forgiveness give—and
 take!



KUZA-NAMA.

LIX.

Listen again. One Evening at the Close
Of Ramazan, ere the better Moon arose,
In that old Potter's Shop I stood alone
With the clay Population round in Rows.

LX.

And, strange to tell, among that Earthen Lot
Some could articulate, while others not:

And suddenly one more impatient cried—
“Who is the Potter, pray, and who the Pot?”

LXI.

Then said another—“Surely not in vain
“My Substance from the common Earth was
ta'en,

“That He who subtly wrought me into Shape
“Should stamp me back to common Earth
again.”

LXII.

Another said—“Why, ne'er a peevish Boy,
“Would break the Bowl from which he drank
in Joy;

“Shall He that made the Vessel in pure
Love
“And Fanny, in an after Rage destroy!”

LXIII.

None answer'd this; but after Silence spake
A Vessel of a more ungainly Make:

"They sneer at me for leaning all awry;
 "What! did the Hand then of the Potter
 shake!"

LXIV.

Said one—"Folks of a surly Tapster tell,
 "And daub his Visage with the Smoke of Hell;
 "They talk of some strict Testing of us—
 Pish!
 "He's a Good Fellow, and 'twill all be well."

LXV.

Then said another with a long-drawn Sigh,
 "My Clay with long oblivion is gone dry:
 "But, fill me with the old familiar Juice,
 "Methinks I might recover by-and-bye!"

LXVI.

So while the Vessels one by one were speaking,
 One spied the little Crescent all were seeking:
 And then they jogg'd each other, "Brother!
 Brother!
 "Hark to the Porter's Shoulder-knot a-creak-
 ing!"

* * * * *

LXVII.

Ah, with the Grape my fading Life provide,
 And wash my Body whence the Life has died,
 And in the Windingsheet of Vine-leaf wrapt,
 So bury me by some sweet Garden-side.

LXVIII.

That ev'n my buried Ashes such a Snare
Of Perfume shall fling up into the Air,
As not a True Believer passing by
But shall be overtaken unaware.

LXIX.

Indeed the Idols I have loved so long
Have done my Credit in Men's Eye much
wrong:
Have drown'd my Honor in a shallow Cup,
And sold my Reputation for a Song.

LXX.

Indeed, indeed, Repentance oft before
I swore—but was I sober when I swore?
And then and then came Spring, and Rose-
in-hand
My thread-bare Penitence apieces tore.

LXXI.

And much as Wine has play'd the Infidel,
And robb'd me of my Robe of Honor—well,
I often wonder what the Vintners buy
One half so precious as the Goods they sell.

LXXII.

Alas, that Spring should vanish with the Rose!
That Youth's sweet-scented Manuscript should
close!
The Nightingale that in the Branches sang,
Ah, whence, and whither flown again, who
knows!

LXXIII.

Ah Love! could thou and I with Fate conspire
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
Would not we shatter it to bits—and then
Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's Desire!

LXXIV.

Ah, Moon of my Delight who know'st no wane,
The Moon of Heav'n is rising once again:
How oft hereafter rising shall she look
Through this same Garden after me—in vain!

LXXV.

And when Thyself with shining Foot shall
pass
Among the Guests Star-scatter'd on the Grass,
And in thy joyous Errand reach the Spot
Where I made one—turn down an empty
Glass!

TAMAM SHUD.

NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

It must be admitted that FitzGerald took great liberties with the original in his version of Omar Khayyam. The first stanza is entirely his own, and in stanza xxxi. of the fourth edition (xxxvi. in the second) he has introduced two lines from Attar (See letters p. 251). In stanza lxxxii. (fourth edition), writes Professor Cowell, 'There is no original for the line about the snake: I have looked for it in vain in Nicholas; but I have always supposed that the last line is FitzGerald's mistaken version of Quatr. 236 in Nicolas' ed. which runs thus:

O thou who knowest the secrets of every one's mind,
Who graspest every one's hand in the hour of weak-
ness,
O God, give me repentance and accept my excuses,
O thou who givest repentance and acceptest the excuses
of every one.

FitzGerald mistook the meaning of giving and accepting as used here, and so invented his last line out of his own mistake. I wrote to him about it when I was in Calcutta; but he never cared to alter it.'

VARIATIONS
BETWEEN THE SECOND, THIRD, AND
FOURTH EDITIONS OF

OMAR KHAYYAM.

Stanza

I. In ed. 2:

Wake! For the Sun beyond yon Eastern
height

Has chased the Session of the Stars from
Night;

And, to the field of Heav'n ascending
strikes

The Sultan's Turret with a Shaft of Light.

In the first draught of ed. 3 the first
and second lines stood thus:

Wake! For the Sun before him into Night
A Signal flung that put the Stars to flight.

II. In ed. 2:

Why lags the drowsy Worshiper outside?

V. In edd. 2 and 3:

But still a Ruby gushes from the Vine.

IX. In edd, 2 and 3.

Morning a thousand Roses brings, you
say.

Stanza

x. In ed. 2.

Let Rustum cry "To battle!" as he likes,
Or Hatim Tai "To Supper"—heed not
you.

In ed. 3:

Let Zal and Rustum thunder as they will.

xii. In ed. 2:

Here with a little Bread beneath the
Bough,
A Flask of Wine, a Book of Verse—and
Thou, etc.

xiii. In ed. 2:

Ah, take the Cash, and let the Promise
go,
Nor heed the music of a distant Drum!

xx. In ed. 2:

And this delightful Herb whose living
Green.

xxii. In edd. 2 and 3:

That from his Vintage rolling Time has
prest.

xxvi. In edd. 2 and 3:

Of the Two Worlds so learnedly, are
thrust.

xxvii. In ed. 2:

Came out by the same door as in I went.

xxviii. In edd. 2 and 3:

And with my own hand wrought to
make it grow.

Stanza

- xxx. In ed. 2:
 Ah, contrite Heav'n endowed us with
 the Vine
 To Drug the memory of that insolence!
- xxxI. In ed. 2:
 And many Knots unravel'd by the Road.
- xxxII. In edd. 2 and 3:
 There was the Veil through which I
 could not see.
- xxxIII. In ed. 2:
 Nor Heav'n, with those eternal Signs
 reveal'd.
- xxxIV. In ed. 2:
 Then of the Thee in Me who works
 behind
 The Veil of Universe I cried to find
 A Lamp to guide me through the dark-
 ness; and
 Something then said—"An Understand-
 ing blind."
- xxxv. In ed. 2:
 I lean'd, the secret Well of Life to learn.
- xxxvi. In ed. 2:
 And drink; and that impassive Lip I
 kiss'd.
- xxxvIII. In ed. 2 the only difference is 'For'
 instead of 'And' in the first line;
 but in the first draught of ed. 3
 the stanza appeared thus:

Stanza

For, in your Ear a moment—of the same
 Poor Earth from which that Human
 Whisper came,
 The luckless Mould in which Mankind
 was cast
 They did compose, and call'd him by the
 name.

In ed. 3 the first line was altered to
 Listen — a moment listen!—Of the
 same, etc.

xxxix. In ed. 2:
 On the parcht herbage but may steal
 below.

xl. In ed. 2:
 As then the Tulip for her wonted sup
 Of Heavenly Vintage lifts her chalice up,
 Do you, twin offspring of the soil, till
 Heav'n
 To Earth invert you like an empty Cup.

In the first draught of ed. 3 the stanza
 is the same as in edd. 3 and 4, ex-
 cept that the second line is
 Of Wine from Heav'n her little Tass
 lifts up.

xli. In ed. 2 and the first draught of
 ed. 3:
 O, plagued no more with Human or
 Divine
 To-morrow's tangle to itself resign.

Stanza

XLII. In ed. 2:

And if the Cup you drink, the Lip you
press,
And in what All begins and ends in—
Yes;

Imagine then you are what heretofore
You were—hereafter you shall not be
less.

The first draught of ed. 3 agrees with
edd. 3 and 4 except that the first
line is

And if the Cup, and if the Lip you
press.

XLIII. In ed. 2:

So when at last the Angel of the drink
Of Darkness finds you by the river-
brink,

And, proffering his Cup, invites your
Soul

Forth to your Lips to quaff it—do not
shrink.

In the first draught of ed. 3 the only
change made was from 'proffering'
to 'offering,' but in ed. 3 the stanza
assumed the form in which it also
appeared in ed. 4. The change from
'the Angel' to 'that Angel' was
made in ms. by FitzGerald in a copy
of ed. 4.

XLIV. In ed. 2:

Is't not a shame—is't not a shame for
him

So long in this Clay Suburb to abide!

Stanza

- XLV. In ed. 2:
But that is but a Tent wherein may rest.
- XLVI. In ed. 2:
And fear not lest Existence closing your
Account, should lose, or know the type
no more.
- XLVII. In ed. 2:
As much as Ocean of a pebble-cast.

In ed. 3:
As the Sev'n Seas should heed a pebble-
cast.
- XLVIII. In ed. 2:
One Moment in Annihilation's Waste,
One Moment, of the Well of Life to
taste—
The Stars are setting, and the Cara-
van
Draws to the 'Dawn of Nothing—Oh
make haste.'

In the first draught of ed. 3 line 3
originally stood:
Before the starting Caravan has reach'd
the rest of the stanza being as in edd.
3 and 4.
- XLIX. In ed. 2:
A Hair, they say, divides the False and
True.
The change from 'does' to 'may' in
the last line was made by Fitz-
Gerald in ms.

Stanza

- L. In ed. 2:
A Hair, they say, divides the False and True.
- LII. In edd. 2 and 3:
He does Himself contrive, enact, behold.
- LIII. In the first draught of ed. 3:
To-morrow, when You shall be You no more.
- LIV. In ed. 2:
Better be merry with the fruitful Grape.
- LV. In ed. 2:
You know, my Friends, how bravely in my House
For a new Marriage I did make Carouse.
- LVII. In ed. 2:
Have squared the Year to Human Compass, eh?
If so, by striking from the Calendar.
- LXII. In ed. 2:
When the frail Cup is crumbled into Dust!
- LXIII. In ed. 2:
The Flower that once is blown forever dies.
- LXV. In edd. 2 and 3:
They told their fellows, and to Sleep return'd.

Stanza

LXVI. In ed. 2:

And after many days my Soul return'd
And said, 'Behold, Myself am Heav'n
and Hell.'

LXVII. In ed. 2:

And Hell the Shadow of a Soul on fire.

LXVIII. In ed. 2:

Of visionary Shapes that come and go
Round with this Sun-illumin'd Lantern
held.

LXIX. In ed. 2:

Impotent Pieces of the Game He plays.

LXX. In ed. 2:

But Right or Left as strikes the Player
goes.

LXXII. In ed. 2 and the first draught of ed. 3:
And that inverted Bowl we call The
Sky.

In edd. 2 and 3:
As impotently rolls as you or I.

LXXIX. In ed. 2:

Pure Gold for what he lent us dross-
allay'd.

LXXXI. In ed. 2:

For all the Sin the Face of wretched
Man

Is black with—Man's Forgiveness give
—and take!

Stanza

LXXXIII. In ed. 2:

And once again there gather'd a scarce
 heard
 Whisper among them; as it were, the
 stirr'd
 Ashes of some all but extinguisht
 Tongue
 Which mine ear kindled into living
 Word.

LXXXIV. In ed. 2:

My Substance from the common Earth
 was ta'en,
 That He who subtly wrought me into
 Shape
 Should stamp me back to shapeless
 Earth again?

LXXXV. In ed. 2:

Another said — 'Why, ne'er a peevish
 Boy
 'Would break the Cup from which he
 drank in Joy;
 'Shall He that of his own free Fancy
 made
 The Vessel, in an after-rage destroy!'

LXXXVI. In ed. 2:

None answered this; but after silence
 spake.

LXXXVII. In ed. 2:

Thus with the Dead as with the Living,
 What?

Stanza

And Why? so ready, but the Wherefor
not,

One on a sudden peevishly exclaimed,
'Which is the Potter, pray, and which
the Pot?'

LXXXVIII. In ed. 2:

Said one—'Folks of a surly Master tell,
'And daub his Visage with the Smoke of
Hell;

'They talk of some sharp Trial of us—
Pish!

He's a Good Fellow, and 'twill all we
well.'

LXXXIX. In ed. 2:

'Well,' said another, 'Whoso will, let
try.'

xc. In ed. 2:

One spied the little Crescent all were
seeking.

xci. In ed. 2:

And wash my Body whence the Life
has died.

xciii. In ed. 2:

Have done my credit in Men's eye much
wrong.

xcv. In ed. 2:

One half so precious as the ware they
sell.

Stanza

xcvii. In ed. 2:

Toward which the fainting Traveler
might spring.

xcviii. In ed. 2:

Oh if the World were but to re-create,
That we might catch ere closed the
Book of Fate,
And make The Writer on a fairer leaf
Inscribe our names, or quite obliterate!

xcix. In ed. 2:

Ah Love! could you and I with Fate
conspire.

c. In ed. 2:

But see! The rising Moon of Heav'n
again

Looks for us, Sweetheart, through the
quivering Plane:

How oft hereafter rising will she look
Among those leaves—for one of us in
vain!

ci. In ed. 3:

And when Yourself with silver Foot
shall pass.

In the first draught of ed. 3 'Foot'
is changed to 'step.'

In ed. 3:

And in your blissful errand reach the
spot.

STANZAS WHICH APPEAR IN THE
SECOND EDITION ONLY.

xiv. Were it not Folly, Spider-like to spin
The Thread of present Life away to
win—

What? for ourselves, who know not
if we shall
Breathe out the very Breath we now
breathe in!

xx. (This stanza is quoted in the note to
stanza xviii. in the third and
fourth editions.)

xxviii. Another Voice, when I am sleeping,
cries,

“The Flower should open with the
Morning skies.”

And a retreating Whisper, as I
wake—

“The Flower that once has blown for-
ever dies.”

xliv. Do you, within your little hour of
Grace,

The waving Cypress in your Arms
enlace,

Before the Mother back into her
arms

Fold, and dissolve you in a last em-
brace.

LXV. If but the Vine and Love-abjuring
 Band
 Are in the Prophet's Paradise to stand,
 Alack, I doubt the Prophet's Para-
 dise
 Were empty as the hollow of one's
 Hand.

LXVII. For let Philosopher and Doctor preach
 Of what they will, and what they will
 not—each
 Is but one Link in an eternal Chain
 That none can slip, nor break, nor
 over-reach.

LXXXVI. Nay, but, for terror of his wrathful
 Face,
 I swear I will not call Injustice Grace;
 Not one Good Fellow of the Tavern
 but
 Would kick so poor a Coward from the
 place.

xc. And once again there gather'd a
 scarce heard
 Whisper among them; as it were, the
 stirr'd
 Ashes of some all but extinguisht
 Tongue,
 Which mine ear kindled into living
 Word.

(In the third and fourth editions
 LXXXIII. stanza takes the place of
 this.)

xcix. Whither resorting from the vernal
Heat
Shall Old Acquaintance Old Acquain-
tance greet,
Under the Branch that leans above
the Wall
To shed his Blossom over head and
feet.

cvi. Better, oh better, cancel from the
Scroll
Of Universe one luckless Human Soul,
Than drop by drop enlarge the
Flood that rolls
Hoarser with Anguish as the Ages
roll.



SALAMAN AND ABSAL
AN ALLEGORY
TRANSLATED FROM THE PERSIAN
OF
JAMI



LETTER TO PROFESSOR COWELL.

MY DEAR COWELL,

Two years ago, when we began (I for the first time) to read this Poem together, I wanted you to translate it, as something that should interest a few who are worth interesting. You, however, did not see the way clear then, and had Aristotle pulling you by one Shoulder and Prakrit Vararuchi by the other, so as indeed to have hindered you up to this time completing a Version of Hafiz' best Odes which you had then happily begun. So, continuing to like old Jami more and more, I must try my hand upon him; and here is my reduced Version of a small Original. What Scholarship it has is yours, my Master in Persian, and so much beside; who are so further answerable for all than by well liking and wishing publisht what you may scarce have Leisure to find due fault with.

Had all the Poem been like Parts, it would have been all translated, and in such Prose lines as you measure Hafiz in, and such as any one should adopt who does not feel himself so much of a poet as him he translates and some he translates for—before whom it is best to lay the raw material as genuine as may be, to work up to their own better Fancies. But, unlike Hafiz' best—(whose Sonnets are some-

times as close packt as Shakespeare's, which they resemble in more ways than one)—Jami, you know, like his Countrymen generally, is very diffuse in what he tells, and his way of telling it. The very structure of the Persian Couplet—(here, like people on the Stage, I am repeating to you what you know, with an Eye to the small Audience beyond)—so often ending with the same Word, or Two Words, if but the Foregoing Syllable secure a lawful Rhyme, so often makes the Second Line but a slightly varied Repetition, or Modification of the First, and gets slowly over Ground often hardly worth gaining. This iteration is common indeed to the Hebrew Psalms and Proverbs—where, however, the Value of the Repetition is different. In your Hafiz also, not Two only, but Eight or Ten Lines perhaps are tied to the same Close of Two—or Three—words; a verbal Ingenuity as much valued in the East as better Thought. And how many of all the Odes called his, more and fewer in various Copies, do you yourself care to deal with?—And in the better ones how often some lines, as I think for this reason, unworthy of the Rest—interpolated perhaps from the Mouths of his many Devotees, Mystical and Sensual—or crept into Manuscripts of which he never arranged or corrected one from the First?

This, together with the confined Action of Persian Grammar, whose organic simplicity seems to me its difficulty when applied, makes the Line by Line Translation of a Poem not line by line precious tedious in proportion to

its length. Especially—(what the Sonnet does not feel)—in the Narrative; which I found when once eased in its Collar, and yet missing somewhat of rhythmical Amble, somehow, and not without resistance on my part, swerved into that “easy road” of Verse—easiest as unbeset with any exigencies of Rhyme. Those little Stories, too, which you thought untractable, but which have their Use as well as Humor by way of quaint Interlude Music between the little Acts, felt ill at ease in solemn Lowth-Isaiah Prose, and had learn’d their tune, you know, before even Hiawatha came to teach people to quarrel about it. Till one part drawing on another, the Whole grew to the present form.

As for the much bodily omitted—it may be readily guessed that an Asiatic of the 15th Century might say much on such a subject that an Englishman of the 19th would not care to read. Not that our Jami is ever licentious like his Contemporary Chaucer, nor like Chaucer’s Posterity in Times that called themselves more Civil. But better Men will not now endure a simplicity of Speech that Worse Men abuse. Then the many more, and foolisher, Stories—preliminary Te Deums to Allah and Allah’s shadow Shah—very much about Alef Noses, Eyebrows like inverted Nuns, drunken Narcissus Eyes—and that eternal Moon Face which never wanes from Persia—of all which there is surely enough in this Glimpse of the Original. No doubt some Oriental Character escapes—the Story sometimes becomes too

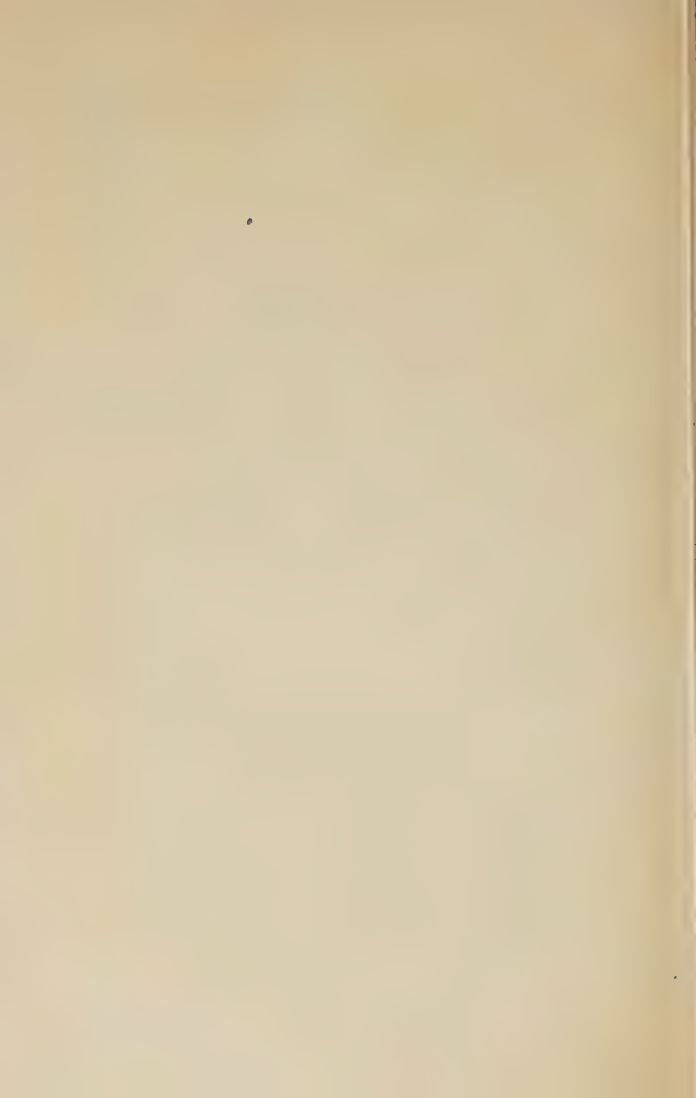
Skin and Bone without due interval of even Stupid and Bad. Of the two Evils?—At least what I have chosen is least in point of bulk; scarcely in proportion with the length of its Apology which, as usual, probably discharges one's own Conscience at too great a Price; people at once turning against you the Arms they might have wanted had you not laid them down. However, it may be with this, I am sure a complete Translation—even in Prose—would not have been a readable one—which, after all, is a useful property of most Books, even of Poetry.

In studying the Original, you know, one gets contentedly carried over barren Ground in a new Land of Language—excited by chasing any new Game that will but show Sport; the most worthless to win asking perhaps all the sharper Energy to pursue and so far yielding all the more Satisfaction when run down. Especially, cheered on as I was by such a Huntsman as poor Dog of a Persian Scholar never hunted with before; and moreover—but that was rather in the Spanish Sierras—by the Presence of a Lady in the Field, silently brightening about us like Aurora's Self, or chiming in with musical Encouragement that all we started and ran down must be Royal Game!

Ah, happy Days! When shall we three meet again—when dip in that unreturning Tide of Time and Circumstance!—In those Meadows far from the World, it seemed as Salaman's Island—before an Iron Railway broke the Heart of that Happy Valley whose Gossip was



“ Fledges the river-lip on which we lean.” - Page 79.
Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam.



the Mill-wheel, and Visitors the Summer Airs that momentarily ruffled the sleepy Stream that turned it as they chased one another over to lose themselves in Whispers in the Copse beyond. Or returning—I suppose you remember whose lines they are—

When Winter Skies were tinged with Crimson still
Where Thornbush nestles on the quiet hill,
And the live Amber round the setting Sun,
Lighting the Laborer home whose Work is done,
Burn'd like a Golden Angel-ground above
The solitary Home of Peace and Love—

at such an hour drawing home together for a fireside night of it with *Æschylus* or *Calderon* in the Cottage, whose walls, modest almost as those of the Poor who clustered—and with good reason—round, make to my Eyes the Towered Crown of Oxford hanging in the Horizon, and with all Honor won, but a dingy Vapor in Comparison. And now, should they beckon from the terrible Ganges, and this little Book begun as a happy Record of past, and pledge perhaps of future, Fellowship in Study, darken already with the shadow of everlasting Farewell!

But to turn from you Two to a Public—nearly as numerous—(with whom, by the way, this Letter may die without a name that you know very well how to supply),—here is the best I could make of Jami's Poem—"Ouvrage de peu d'etendue," says the "Biographie Universelle," and, whatever that means, here collapsed into a nutshell Epic indeed; whose

Story, however, if nothing else, may interest some Scholars as one of Persian Mysticism—perhaps the grand Mystery of all Religions—an Allegory fairly devised and carried out—dramatically culminating as it goes on; and told as to this day the East loves to tell her Story, illustrated by Fables and Tales, so often (as we read in the latest Travels) at the expense of the poor Arab of the Desert.

The Proper Names—and some other Words peculiar to the East—are printed as near as may be to their native shape and sound—"Sulayman" for Solomon—"Yusuf" for Joseph, etc., as being not only more musical, but retaining their Oriental flavor unalloyed with European Association. The accented Vowels are to be pronounced long, as in Italian—Salaman—Absal—Shirin, etc.

The Original is in rhymed Couplets of this measure—

— u — — | — u — — | — u — | |

which those who like Monkish Latin may remember in

Dum Salaman verba Regis cogitat,
Pectus intra de profundis æstuat.

or in English—by way of asking, "your Clemency for us and for our Tragedy"—

Of Salaman and of Absal hear the Song;
Little wants Man here below, nor little long.

NOTICE OF JAMI'S LIFE.

DRAWN FROM ROSENZWEIG'S "BIOGRAPHISCHE NOTIZEN" OF
THE POET.

Nuruddin Abdurrahman, Son of Maulana Nizamuddin Ahmed, and descended on the Mother's side from One of the Four great "Fathers" of Islam, was born A. H. 817, A. D. 1414, in Jam, a little Town of Khorasan, whither his Grandfather had removed from Desht of Ispahan and from which the poet ultimately took his Takhallus, or Poetic name, Jami. This word also signifies "A Cup;" wherefore, he says, "Born in Jam, and dipt in the '*Jam*, of Holy Lore, for a double reason I must be called Jami in the Book of Song."* He was celebrated afterward in other Oriental Titles—"Lord of Poets"—"Elephant of Wisdom," etc., but latterly liked to call himself "The Ancient of Herat," where he mainly resided, and eventually died.

When five years old he received the name of Nuruddin, the "Light of Faith," and even so early began to show the Metal, and take the Stamp that distinguished him through Life.

*He elsewhere plays upon his name, imploring God that he may be accepted as a Cup to pass about that Spiritual Wine of which the Persian Mystical Poets make so much.

In 1419, a famous Sheikh, Khwajah Moham-med Parsa, then in the last Year of his Life, was being carried through Jam. "I was not then Five Years old," says Jami, "and my Father, who with his Friends went forth to salute him, had me carried on the Shoulders of one of the Family and set down before the Litter of the Sheikh, who gave a Nosegay into my hand. Sixty Years have passed, and methinks I now see before me the bright Image of the Holy Man, and feel the Blessing of his Aspect, from which I date my after Devotion to that Brotherhood in which I hope to be enrolled."

So again, when Maulana Fakhruddin Loristani had alighted at his Mother's house—"I was then so little that he set me upon his Knee, and with his Fingers drawing the Letters of 'Ali' and 'Omar' in the Air, laughed with delight to hear me spell them. He also by his Goodness sowed in my Heart the Seed of his Devotion, which has grown to Increase within me--in which I hope to live, and in which to die. Oh, God! Dervish let me live, and Dervish yie; and in the Company of the Dervish do Thou quicken me to life again!"

Jami first went to a School at Herat; and afterward to one founded by the Great Timur at Samarcand. There he not only outstript his Fellow-students in the very Encyclopædic Studies of Persian Education, but even puzzled his Doctors in Logic, Astronomy, and Theology; who, however, with unresenting Gravity welcomed him—"Lo! a new Light added to our Galaxy!"—And among them in the wider

Field of Samarcand he might have liked to remain, had not a Dream recalled him to Herat. A Vision of the Great Sufi Master there, Mohammed Saaduddin Kashghari, appeared to him in his Sleep, and bade him return to One who would satisfy all Desire. Jami returned to Herat; he saw the Sheikh discoursing with his Disciples by the Door of the Great Mosque; day after day passed him by without daing to present himself; but the Master's Eye was upon him; day by day drew him nearer and nearer—till at last the Sheikh announces to those about him—"Lo! this Day have I taken a Falcon in my Snare!"

Under him Jami began his Sufi Noviciate, with such Devocion, both to Study and Master, that going, he tells us, but for one Summer Holiday into the Country, a single Line sufficed to "lure the Tassel-gentle back again;"

"Lo! here am I, and Thou look'st on the Rose!"

By and by he withdrew, by due course of Sufi Instruction, into Solitude so long and profound, that on his return to Men he had almost lost the Power of Converse with them. At last, when duly taught, and duly authorized to teach as Sufi Doctor, he yet would not take upon himself so to do, though solicited by those who had seen such a Vision of him as had drawn himself to Herat; and not till the Evening of his Life was he to be seen taking that place by the Mosque which his departed Master had been used to occupy before.

Meanwhile, he had become Poet, which no

doubt winged his Reputation and Doctrine far and wide through a People so susceptible of poetic impulse.

"A Thousand times," he says, "I have repented of such Employment; but I could no more shirk it than one can shirk what the Pen of Fate has written on his Forehead"—"As Poet I have resounded through the World; Heaven filled itself with my Song, and the Bride of Time adorned her Ears and Neck with the Pearls of my Verse, whose coming Caravan the Persian Hafiz and Saadi came forth gladly to salute, and the Indian Khosrau and Hasan hailed as a Wonder of the World."

"The Kings of India and Rum greet me by Letter; the Lords of Irak and Tabriz load me with Gifts; and what shall I say of those of Khorasan, who drown me in an Ocean of Munificence?"

This, though Oriental, is scarcely bombast. Jami was honored by Princes at home and abroad, at the very time they were cutting one another's Throats; by his own Sultan Abu Said; by Hasan Beg of Mesopotamia—"Lord of Tabriz"—by whom Abu Said was defeated, dethroned, and slain; by Mohammed II. of Turkey—"King of Rum"—who in his turn defeated Hasan; and lastly by Husein Mirza Baikara, who somehow made away with the Prince whom Hasan had set up in Abu Said's Place at Herat. Such is the House that Jack builds in Persia.

As Hasan Beg, however—the Usuncassan of old European Annals—is singularly connected

with the present Poem, and with probably the most important event in Jami's Life, I will briefly follow the Steps that led to that as well as other Princely Intercourse.

In A. H. 877, A. D. 1472, Jami set off on his Pilgrimage to Mecca, as every True Believer who could afford it was expected once in his Life to do. He and, on his Account, the Caravan he went with, were honorably and safely escorted through the interjacent Countries by order of their several Potentates as far as Baghdad. There Jami fell into trouble by the Treachery of a Follower whom he had re-proved, and who misquoted his Verse into disparagement of Ali' the Darling Imam of Persia. This, getting wind at Baghdad, was there brought to solemn Tribunal. Jami came victoriously off; his Accuser was pilloried with a dockt Beard in Baghdad Market-place; but the Poet was so ill pleased with the stupidity of those who had believed the Report, that, in an after poem, he called for a Cup of Wine to seal up Lips of whose Utterance the Men of Baghdad were unworthy.

After four months' stay there, during which he visited at Helleh the Tomb of Ali's Son Husein, who had fallen at Kerbela, he set forth again—to Najaf (where he says his Camel sprang forward at sight of Ali's own Tomb)—crossed the Desert in twenty-two days, continually meditating on the Prophet's Glory, to Medina; and so at last to Mecca, where, as he sang in a Ghazal, he went through all Moham-

medan Ceremony with a Mystical Understanding of his Own.

He then turned Homeward: was entertained for forty-five days at Damascus, which he left the very Day before the Turkish Mohammed's Envoys came with 5000 Ducats to carry him to Constantinople. On arriving at Amida, the Capital of Mesopotamia, he found War broken out and in full Flame between that Sultan and Hasan Beg, King of the Country, who caused Jami to be honorably escorted through the dangerous Roads to Tabriz; there received him in full Divan, and would fain have him abide at his Court awhile. Jami, however, was intent on Home, and once more seeing his aged Mother—for he was turned of Sixty—and at last reached Herat in the Month of Shaaban, 1473, after the Average Year's absence.

This is the Hasan, "in Name and Nature Handsome" (and so described by some Venetian Ambassadors of the Time), who was Father of Yakub Beg, to whom Jami dedicated the following Poem; and who, after the due murder of an Elder Brother, succeeded to the Throne; till all the Dynasties of "Black and White Sheep" together were swept away a few years after by Ismail, Founder of the Sofi Dynasty in Persia.

Arrived at home, Jami found Husein Mirza Baikara, last of the Timuridæ, seated on the Throne there, and ready to receive him with open Arms. Nizamuddin Ali Shir, Husein's Vizir, a Poet, too, had hailed in Verse the

Poet's Advent from Damascus as "The Moon rising in the West;" and they both continued affectionately to honor him as long as he lived.

Jami sickened of his mortal Illness on the 13th of Moharrem, 1492—a Sunday. His Pulse began to fail on the following Friday, about the Hour of Morning Prayer, and stopped at the very moment when the Muezzin began to call to Evening. He had lived Eighty-one Years. Sultan Husein undertook the pompous Burial of one whose Glory it was to have lived and died in Dervish Poverty; the Dignitaries of the Kingdom followed him to the Grave; where twenty days afterward was recited in presence of the Sultan and his Court an Eulogy composed by the Vizir, who also laid the first Stone of a Monument to his Friend's Memory—the first Stone of "Tarbet'i Jami," in the Street of Meshhed, a principal Thoro'fare of the City of Herat. For, says Rosenzweig, it must be kept in mind that Jami was revered not only as a Poet and Philosopher, but as a Saint also; who not only might work a Miracle himself, but leave such a Power lingering about his Tomb. It was known that an Arab, who had falsely accused him of selling a Camel he knew to be unsound, died very shortly after, as Jami had predicted, and on the very selfsame spot where the Camel fell. And his hand into his Horse's Nose-bag to see if the beast had finisht his Corn, had his Forefinger bitten off by the same—from which

"Verstumlung" he soon died—I suppose, as he ought, of Lock-jaw.

The Persians, who are adepts at much elegant Ingenuity, are fond of commemorating Events by some analogous Word or Sentence whose Letters, cabalistically corresponding to certain Numbers, compose the Date required. In Jami's case they have hit upon the word "Kas," A Cup, whose signification brings his own name to Memory, and whose relative letters make up his eighty-one years. They have Tarikhs also for remembering the Year of his Death: Rosenzweig gives some; but Ouseley the prettiest of all;—

Dud az Khorasan bar amed—

"The smoke" of Sighs "went up from Khorassan."

No Biographer, says Rosenzweig cautiously, records of Jami's having more than one Wife (Granddaughter of his Master Sheikh) and Four Sons; which, however, are Five too many for the Doctrine of this Poem. Of the Sons, Three died Infant; and the Fourth (born to him in very old Age), and for whom he wrote some Elementary Tracts, and the more famous "Beharistan," lived but a few years, and was remembered by his Father in the Preface to his Khiradnama-i Iskander—Alexander's Wisdom-book—which perhaps had also been begun for the Boy's Instruction. He had likewise a nephew, one Maulana Abdullah, who was ambitious of following his Uncle's Footsteps in Poetry. Jami first dissuaded him; then, by way of trial whether he had a Talent as well

as a Taste, bade him imitate Firdausi's Satire on Shah Mahmud. The Nephew did so well, that Jami then encouraged him to proceed; himself wrote the first Couplet of his First (and most celebrated) Poem—Laila and Majnun—

This Book of which the Pen has now laid the Foundation,
May the diploma of Acceptance one day befall it,—

and Abdullah went on to write that and four other Poems which Persia continues to delight in to the present day, remembering their Author under his Takhallus of Hatifi—"The Voice from Heaven"—and Last of the classic Poets of Persia.

Of Jami's literary Offspring, Rosenzweig numbers forty-four. But Shir Khan Ludi in his "Memoirs of the Poets," says Ouseley, accounts him Author of Ninety-nine Volumes of Grammar, Poetry, and Theology, which, he says, "continue to be universally admired in all parts of the Eastern World, Iran, Turan, and Hindustan"—copied some of them into precious Manuscripts, illuminated with Gold and Painting, by the greatest Penmen and Artists of the time; one such—the "Beharistan"—said to have cost some thousands of pounds—autographed as their own by two Sovereign Descendants of Timur; and now repositd away from "the Drums and Trampings" of Oriental Conquest in the tranquil seclusion of an English library.

With us, his Name is almost wholly associ-

ated with his "Yusuf and Zulaikha;" the "Beharistan" aforesaid: and this present "Salaman and Afsal," which he tells us is like to be the last product of his Old Age. And these three Poems count for three of the brother Stars of that Constellation into which his seven best Mystical Poems are clustered under the name of "Heft Aurang"—those "Seven Thrones" to which we of the West and North give our characteristic name of "Great Bear" and "Charles's Wain."

This particular Salaman Star, which thus conspicuously figures in Eastern eyes, but is reduced to one of very inferior magnitude as seen through this English Version,—is one of many Allegories under which the Persian Mystic symbolized an esoteric doctrine which he dared not—and probably could not—more intelligibly reveal. As usual with such Poems in the story-loving East, the main Fable is intersected at every turn with some other subsidiary story, more or less illustrative of the matter in hand: many of these of a comic and grotesque Character mimicking the more serious, as may the Gracioso of the Spanish Drama. As for the meter of the Poem, it is the same as that adopted by Attar, Jelaluddin and other such Poets—and styled, as I have heard, the "Meter Royal"—although not having been used by Firdausi for his Shah-nameh. Thus it runs:

— 0 — — | — 0 — — | — 0 — |

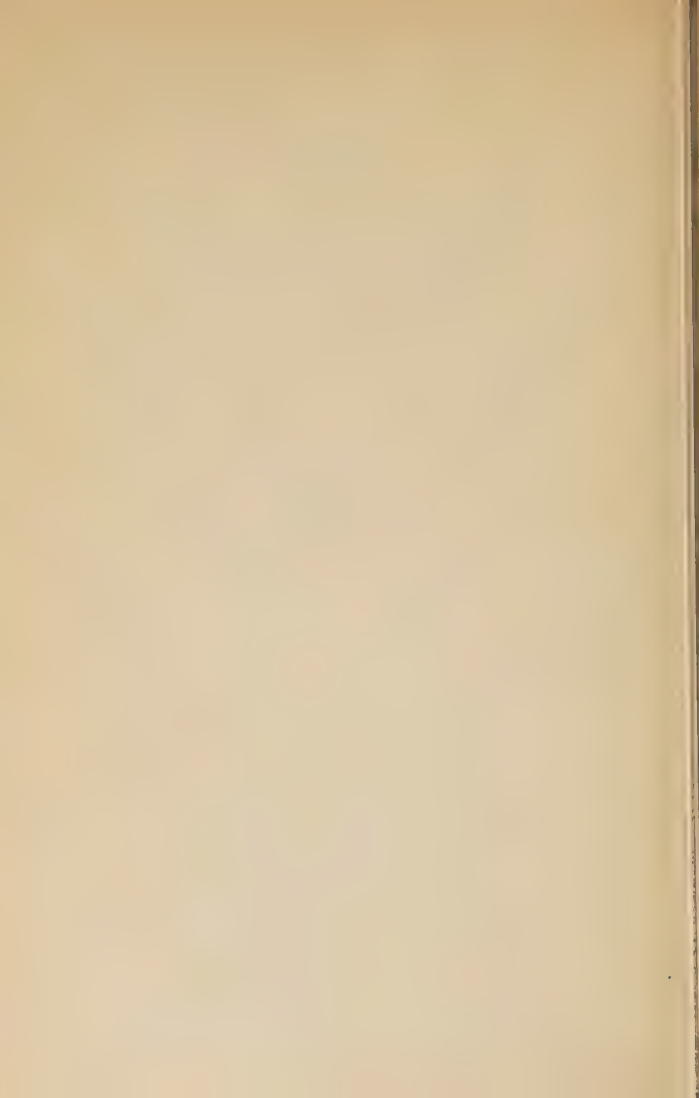
a pace which, to those not used to it, seems to

bring one up with too sudden a halt at the end of every line to promise easy traveling through an Epic. It may be represented in Monkish Latin Quantity:

Dum Salaman verba Regis cogitat,
Pectus illi de profundis æstuat;

or by English accent in two lines that may also plead for us and our Allegory:

Of Salaman and of Absal hear the Song;
Little wants man here below, nor little long.



SALAMAN AND ABSAL.

PRELIMINARY INVOCATION.

Oh Thou, whose Spirit through this universe,
In which Thou dost involve thyself diffused,
Shall so perchance irradiate human clay
That men, suddenly dazzled, lose themselves
In ecstasy before a mortal shrine
Whose Light is but a Shade of the Divine;
Not till thy Secret Beauty through the cheek
Of Laila smite doth she inflame Majnun;*
And not till Thou have kindled Shirin's Eyes
The hearts of those two Rivals swell with
blood.

For Loved and Lover are not but by Thee,
Nor Beauty;—mortal Beauty but the veil
Thy Heavenly hides behind, and from itself
Feeds, and our hearts yearn after as a Bride
That glances past us veil'd—but ever so
That none the veil from what it hides may
know.

How long wilt thou continue thus the World
To cozen† with the phantom of a veil

* Well known types of Eastern Lovers. Shirin and her Suitors figure in Sect. XX.

† The Persian Mystics also represent the Deity dicing with Human Destiny behind the Curtain.

From which thou only peepest? I would be
Thy Lover, and thine only—I, mine eyes
Seal'd in the light of Thee to all but Thee,
Yea, in the révelation of Thyself
Lost to Myself, and all that Self is not
Within the Double world that is but One.
Thou lurkest under all the forms of Thought,
Under the form of all Created things;
Look where I may, still nothing I discern
But Thee throughout this Universe, wherein
Thyself Thou dost reflect, and through those
eyes

Of him whom Man thou madest, scrutinize.
To thy Harim Dividuality
No entrance finds—no word of This and That;
Do Thou my separate and derived Self
Make one with thy Essential? Leave me room
On that Divan which leaves no room for
Twain;

Lest, like the simple Arab in the tale,
I grow perplexed, oh God! 'twixt "Me" and
"Thee;"

If I—this Spirit that inspires me whence?
If Thou—then what this sensual Impotence?

From the solitary Desert
Up to Baghdad came a simple
Arab; there amid the rout
Grew bewilder'd of the countless
People, hither, thither, running,
Coming, going, meeting, parting,
Clamor, clatter, and confusion,

All about him and about.
 Travel-wearied, hubbub-dizzy,
 Would the simple Arab fain
 Get to sleep—"But then, on waking,
 "How," quoth he, "amid so many
 "Waking know Myself again?"
 So, to make the matter certain,
 Strung a gourd about his ankle,
 And, into a corner creeping,
 Baghdad and Himself and People
 Soon were blotted from his brain.
 But one that heard him and divined
 His purpose, slyly crept behind;
 From the Sleeper's ankle clipping,
 Round his own the pumpkin tied,
 And laid him down to sleep beside
 By and by the Arab waking
 Looks directly for his Signal—
 Sees it on another's Ankle—
 Cries aloud, "Oh Good-for-nothing
 "Rascal to perplex me so!
 "That by you I am bewilder'd,
 "Whether I be I or no!
 "If I—the Pumpkin why on You?
 "If You—then Where am I, and Who?"

And yet, how long, O Jami, stringing Verse,
 Pearl after pearl, on that old Harp of thine?
 Year after year attuning some new Song,
 The breath of some old story?* Life is gone,
 And that last song is not the last; my Soul

* "Yus'uf and Zulaikha," "Laila and Majnun," etc.

Is spent—and still a Story to be told!
And I, whose back is crooked as the Harp
I still keep tuning through the Night till
Day!
That harp untuned by Time—the harper's
hand
Shaking with Age—how shall the harper's
hand
Repair its cunning, and the sweet old harp
Be modulated as of old? Methinks
'Twere time to break and cast it in the fire;
The vain old harp, that, breathing from its
strings
No music more to charm the ears of men,
May, from its scented ashes, as it burns,
Breathe resignation to the Harper's soul,
Now that his body looks to dissolution.
My teeth fall out—my two eyes see no more
Till by Feringhi glasses turn'd to four;*
Pain sits with me sitting behind my knees,
From which I hardly rise unhelpt of hand;
I bow down to my root, and like a Child
Yearn, as is likely, to my Mother Earth,
Upon whose bosom I shall cease to weep,
And on my Mother's bosom fall asleep.†
The House in ruin, and its music heard
No more within, nor at the door of speech,
Better in silence and oblivion
To fold me head and foot, remembering

* First notice of Spectacles in Oriental Poetry, perhaps.

† The same Figure is found in Chaucer's "Pardoner's Tale," and, I think, in other western poems of that era.

What The Voice whisper'd in the Master's*
ear—

“No longer think of Rhyme, but think of
Me!”—

Of Whom?—Of Him whose Palace the Soul is,
And Treasure-house—who notices and knows
Its income and out-going, and then comes
To fill it when the Stranger is departed.

Yea; but whose Shadow being Earthly Kings,
Their Attributes, their Wrath and Favor,
His,—

Lo! in the meditation of His glory,
The Shah† whose subject upon Earth I am.
As he of Heaven's, comes on me unaware,
And suddenly arrests me for his due.
Therefore for one last travel, and as brief
As may become the feeble breath of Age,
My weary pen once more drinks of the well,
Whence, of the Mortal writing, I may read
Anticipation of the Invisible.

One who travel'd in the Desert
Saw Majnun where he was sitting
All alone like a Magician
Tracing letters in the Sand.

“O distracted Lover! writing

“What the Sword-wind of the Desert

“Undeciphers so that no one

* Mohammed Saaduddin Kashghari, spoken of in
Notice of Jami's life, p. 177.

† Yakub Beg: to whose protection Jami owed a Song
of gratitude.

"After you shall understand."
 Majnun answer'd—"I am writing
 "Only for myself, and only
 "'Laila,'—if forever 'Laila'
 "Writing, in that Word a Volume,
 "Over which for ever pouring,
 "From her very Name I sip
 "In Fancy, till I drink, her Lip."

THE STORY.

PART I.

A Shah there was who ruled the realm of Yun,*
 And wore the Ring of Empire of Sikander;
 And in his reign A Sage, of such report
 For Insight reaching quite beyond the Veil,
 That Wise men from all quarters of the World,
 To catch the jewel falling from his lips
 Out of the secret treasure as he went,
 Went in a girdle round him.—Which The Shah
 Observing, took him to his secrecy;
 Stirr'd not a step, nor set design afoot,
 Without the Prophet's sanction; till, so coun-
 sell'd,
 From Kaf to Kaf † reach'd his Dominion:

* Or "Yavan," Son of Japhet, from whom the country was called "Yunan"—Ionia, meant by the Persians to express Greece generally. Sikander is of course, Alexander the Great.

† The Fabulous Mountain supposed by Asiatics to surround the World, binding the Horizon on all sides.

No People, and no Prince that over them
The ring of Empire wore, but under his
Bow'd down in Battle; rising then in Peace
Under his Justice grew, secure from wrong,
And in their strength was his Dominion strong.
The Shah that has not Wisdom in himself,
Nor has a Wise one for his Counselor,
The wand of his Authority falls short,
And his Dominion crumbles at the base.
For he, discerning not the characters
Of Tyranny and Justice, confounds both,
Making the World a desert, and Redress
A fantom-water of the Wilderness.

God said to the Prophet David—
“David whom I have exalted
“From the sheep to be my People’s
 “Shepherd, by your Justice my
 “Revelations justify.
“Lest the misbelieving—yea,
“The Fire-adoring Princes rather
“Be my Prophets, who fulfil,
“Knowing not my Word, my Will.”

One night The Shah of Yunan as he sate
Contemplating his measureless extent
Of Empire, and the glory wherewithal,
As with a garment robed, he ruled alone;
Then found he nothing wanting to his heart
Unless a Son, who, while he lived, might
 share,

And, after him, his robe of Empire wear.
And then he turned him to The Sage, and
said:

“O Darling of the soul of Iflatun;*
“To whom with all his school Aristo bows;
“Yea, thou that an Eleventh to the Ten
“Intelligences addest: Thou hast read
“The yet unutter’d secret of my Heart;
“Answer—Of all that man desires of God
“Is any blessing greater than a Son?
“Man’s prime Desire; by whom his name and
he
“Shall live beyond himself; by whom his eyes
“Shine living, and his dust with roses blows.
“A Foot for thee to stand on, and an Arm
“To lean by; sharp in battle as a sword;
“Salt of the banquet-table; and a tower
“Of salutary counsel in Divan;
“One in whose youth a Father shall prolong
“His years, and in his strength continue
strong.”

When the shrewd Sage had heard The Shah’s
discourse

In commendation of a Son, he said:

“Thus much of a Good, Son, whose wholesome
growth
“Approves the root he grew from. But for
one
“Kneaded of Evil—well could one revoke
“His generation, and as early pull
“Him and his vices from the string of Time.

* Iflatun, Plato: Aristo, Aristotle: both renowned in the East to this Day. For the Ten Intelligences, see Appendix.

“Like Noah’s, puff’d with insolence and pride,
“Who, reckless of his Father’s warning call,
“Was by the voice of Allah from the door
“Of refuge in his Father’s Ark debarr’d,
“And perish’d in the Deluge.* And as none
“Who long for children may their children
 choose,
“Beware of teasing Allah for a Son,
 “Whom having, you may have to pray to
 lose.”

Sick at heart for want of Children,
Ran before the Saint a Fellow,
 Catching at his garment, crying,
 “Master, hear and help me! Pray
 “That Allah from the barren clay
“Raise me up a fresh young Cypress,
“Who my longing eyes may lighten,
“And not let me like a vapor
 “Unremember’d pass away.
But the Dervish said—“Consider,
 “Wisely let the matter rest
“In the hands of Allah wholly,
“Who, whatever we are after,
 “Understands our business best.”
Still the man persisted—“Master,
“I shall perish in my longing:
“Help, and set my prayer a-going!”
 Then the Dervish raised his hand—
 From the mystic Hunting-land

* See Note in Appendix I.

Of darkness to the Father's arms
A musky Fawn of China drew—
A Boy—who, when the shoot of Passion
In his Nature planted grew,
Took to drinking, dicing, drabbing.
From a corner of the house-top
Ill-insulting honest women,
Dagger-drawing on the husband;
And for many a city-brawl
Still before the Cadi summon'd,
Still the Father prays for all.
Day and night the youngster's doings
Such—the city's talk and scandal;
Neither counsel, threat, entreaty,
Moved him—till the desperate Father
Once more to the Dervish running,
Catches at his garment—crying—
“Oh my only Hope and Helper!
“One more Prayer! That God, who laid,
“Would take this trouble from my head!”
But the Saint replied “Remember
“How that very Day I warn'd you
“Not with blind petition Allah
“Trouble to your own confusion;
“Unto whom remains no more
“To pray for, save that He may pardon
“What so rashly pray'd before.”

“So much for the result; and for the means—
“Oh Shah, who would not be himself a slave,
“Which Shah least should, and of an appetite
“Among the basest of his slaves enslaved—

"Better let Azrael find him on his throne
"Of Empire sitting childless and alone,
"Than his untainted Majesty resign
"To that sedition drink, of which one draught
"Still for another and another craves,
"Till it become a noose to draw the crown
"From off thy brows—about thy lips a ring,
"Of which the rope is in a Woman's hand,
"To lead thyself the road of Nothing down.
"For what is She? A foolish, faithless thing—
"A very Kafir in rapacity;
"Robe her in all the rainbow-tinted woof
"Of Susa, shot with rays of sunny Gold;
"Deck her with jewel thick as Night with star;
"Pamper her appetite with Houri fruit
"Of Paradise, and fill her jewell'd cup
"From the green-mantled Prophet's Well of
 Life—
"One little twist of temper—all your cost
"Goes all for nothing: and, as for yourself—
"Look! On your bosom she may lie for years;
 "But, get you gone a moment out of sight,
"And she forgets you—worse, if, as you turn,
"Her eyes on any younger Lover light."

Once upon the Throne together
Telling one another Secrets,
 Sate Sulayman and Balkis;*
The Hearts of both were turned to Truth

* Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, who, it appears, is no worse in one way than Solomon in another, unless in Oriental Eyes.

Unsullied by Deception.

First the King of Faith Sulayman

Spoke—"However just and wise

"Reported, none of all the many

"Suitors to my palace thronging

"But afar I scrutinize;

"And he who comes not empty-handed

"Grows to Honor in mine Eyes."

After this, Balkis a Secret

From her hidden bosom utter'd,

Saying—"Never night or morning

"Comely youth before me passes

"Whom I look not after, longing."—

"If this, as wise Firdausi says, the curse

"Of better women, what then of the worse?"

The Sage his satire ended; and The Shah,

Determined on his purpose, but the means

Resigning to Supreme Intelligence,

With Magic-mighty Wisdom his own Will

Collegued, and wrought his own accomplishment.

For Lo! from Darkness came to Light A
Child,

Of carnal composition unattaint;

A Perfume from the realm of Wisdom wafted;

A Rosebud blowing on the Royal stem;

The crowning Jewel of the Crown; a Star

Under whose augury triumph'd the Throne.

For whom dividing, and again in one

Whose perfect Jewel, re-uniting, those

Twin Jewel-words, Salamat and Asman,*

* Salamat, Security from Evil; Asman, Heaven.

They hail'd him by the title of Salaman.
And whereas from no Mother milk he drew,
They chose for him a Nurse—her name
Absal—

So young, the opening roses of her breast
But just had budded to an infant's lip;
So beautiful, as from the silver line
Dividing the musk-harvest of her hair
Down to her foot that trampled crowns of
Kings,

A Moon of beauty full; who thus elect
Should in the garment of her bounty fold
Salaman of auspicious augury,
Should feed him with the flowing of her breast.
And, once her eyes had open'd upon Him,
They closed to all the world beside, and fed
For ever doating on her Royal jewel
Close in his golden cradle casketed:
Opening and closing which her day's delight,
To gaze upon his heart-inflaming cheek,—
Upon the Babe whom, if she could, she would
Have cradled as the Baby of her eye.*
In rose and musk she wash'd him—to his lip
Press'd the pure sugar from the honey-comb;
And when, day over, she withdrew her milk,
She made, and having laid him in, his bed,
Burn'd all night like a taper o'er his head.
And still as Morning came, and as he grew,
Finer than any bridal-puppet, which
To prove another's love a woman sends,†

* Literally Mardumak—the Mannikin, or Pupil, of the Eye, corresponding to the Image so frequently used by our old Poets.

† See Appendix.

She trick'd him up—with fresh Collyrium dew
Touch'd his narcissus eyes—the musky locks
Divided from his forehead—and embraced
With gold and ruby girdle his fine waist.
So for seven years she rear'd and tended him:
Nay, when his still-increasing moon of Youth
Into the further Sign of Manhood pass'd,
Pursued him yet, till full fourteen his years,
Fourteen-day full the beauty of his face,
That rode high in a hundred thousand hearts.
For, when Salaman was but half-lance high,
Lance-like he struck a wound in every one,
And shook down splendor round him like a
Sun.

Soon as the Lord of Heav'n had sprung his
horse
Over horizon into the blue field,
Salaman kindled with the wine of sleep,
Mounted a barb of fire for the Maidan;
He and a troop of Princes—Kings in blood,
Kings in the kingdom-troubling tribe of
beauty,
All young in years and courage,* bat in hand
Gallop'd a-field, toss'd down the golden ball
And chased, so many crescent Moons a full;†
And, all alike intent upon the Game,
Salaman still would carry from them all
The prize, and shouting "Ha!" drive home the
ball.

* The same Persian word signifying Youth and
Courage.

† See Appendix.

This done, Salaman bent him as a bow
To Archery—from Masters of the craft
Call'd for an unstrung bow—himself the cord
Fitted unhelp't,* and nimbly with his hand
Twanging made cry, and drew it to his ear:
Then, fixing the three-feather'd fowl, discharged:

And whether aiming at the fawn a-foot,
Or bird on wing, direct his arrow flew,
Like the true Soul that cannot but go true.

When night came, that releases man from toil,
He play'd the chess of social intercourse;
Prepared his banquet-hall like Paradise,
Summon'd his Houri-faced musicians,
And, when his brain grew warm with wine,
the veil

Flung off him of reserve: taking a harp,
Between its dry string and his finger quick
Struck fire: or catching up a lute, as if
A child for chastisement, would pinch its ear
To wailing that should aged eyes make weep.
Now like the Nightingale he sang alone;
Now with another lip to lip; and now
Together blending voice and instrument;
And thus with his associates night he spent.

* Bows being so gradually stiffened, according to the age and strength of the Archer, as at last to need five Hundred-weight of pressure to bend, says an old Translation of Chardin, who describes all the process up to bringing up the string to the ear, "as if to hang it there" before shooting. Then the first trial was, who could shoot highest: then, the mark, etc.

His soul rejoiced in knowledge of all kind;
 The fine edge of his Wit would split a hair,
 And in the noose of apprehension catch
 A meaning ere articulate in word;
 Close as the knitted jewel of Parwin
 His jewel Verse he strung; his Rhetoric
 Enlarging like the Mourners of the Bier.*
 And when he took the nimble reed in hand,
 To run the errand of his Thought along
 Its paper field—the character he traced,
 Fine on the lip of Youth as the first hair,
 Drove Penmen, as that Lovers, to despair.

His Bounty like a Sea was fathomless
 That bubbled up with jewel, and flung pearl
 Where'er it touch'd, but drew not back again;
 It was a Heav'n that rain'd on all below
 Dirhems for drops—

But here that inward Voice
 Arrested and rebuked me—"Foolish Jami!
 "Wearing that indefatigable pen
 "In celebration of an alien Shah
 "Whose Throne, not grounded in the Eternal
 World,
 "If Yesterday it were, To-day is not,
 "To-morrow cannot be."† But I replied;

* The Pleiades and the Great Bear. This is otherwise prettily applied in the Anvari Soheili—"When one grows poor, his Friends, heretofore compact as The Pleiades, disperse wide asunder as The Mourners."

† The Hero of the Story being of Yunan—Ionia, or Greece generally (the Persian Geography not being very precise)—and so not of The Faith.

"Oh Fount of Light!—under an alien name
"I shadow One upon whose head the Crown
"Was and yet Is, and Shall be; whose Firman
"The Kingdoms Sev'n of this World, and the
 Seas,
"And the Sev'n Heavens, alike are subject to.
"Good luck to him who under other Name
"Instructed us that Glory to disguise
"To which the Initiate scarce dare lift his
 eyes."

Sate a lover in a garden
All alone, apostrophizing
Many a flower and shrub about him,
 And the lights of Heav'n above.
Nightingaling thus, a Noodle
Heard him, and, completely puzzled,
"What," quoth he, "and you a Lover,
"Raving, not about your Mistress,
"But about the stars and roses—
 "What have these to do with Love?"
Answer'd he; "Oh thou that aimest
"Wide of Love, and Lovers' language
 "Wholly misinterpreting;
"Sun and Moon are but my Lady's
 "Self, as any Lover knows;
"Hyacinth I said, and meant her
 "Hair—her cheek was in the rose—
"And I myself the wretched weed
 "That in her cypress shadow grows."

And now the cypress stature of Salaman
Had reached his top and now to blossom full

The garden of his Beauty: and Absal,
Fairest of hers, as of his fellows he
The fairest, long'd to gather from the tree.
But, for that flower upon the lofty stem
Of Glory grew to which her hand fell short,
She now with woman's sorcery began
To conjure as she might within her reach.
The darkness of her eyes she darken'd round
With surma, to benight him in mid day,
And over them adorn'd and arch'd the bows*
To wound him there when lost: her musky
locks

Into so many snaky ringlets curl'd,
In which Temptation nestled o'er the cheek
Whose rose she kindled with vermilion dew,
And then one subtle grain of musk laid there,†
The bird of that beloved heart to snare.
Sometimes in passing with a laugh would break
The pearl-enclosing ruby of her lips;
Or, busied in the room, as by mischance
Would let the lifted sleeve disclose awhile
The vein of silver running up within:
Or, rising as in haste, her golden anklets
Clash, at whose sudden summons to bring
down

Under her silver feet the golden Crown.
Thus, by innumerable witcheries,
She went about soliciting his eyes,
Through which she knew the robber unaware
Steals in, and takes the bosom by surprise.

* With dark Indigo-Paint, as the Archery Bow with a thin Papyrus-like Bark.

† A Patch, sc.—“Noir comme le Muse.” De Sacy.

Burning with her love Zulaikha
Built a chamber, wall and ceiling
Blank as an untarnisht mirror,
Spotless as the heart of Yusuf.
Then she made a cunning painter
Multiply her image round it;
Not an inch of wall or ceiling
But re-echoing her beauty.
Then amid them all in all her
Glory sat she down, and sent for
 Yusuf—she began a tale
 Of Love—and lifted up her veil.
Bashfully beneath her burning
Eyes he turn'd away; but turning
Wheresoever, still about him
Saw Zulaikha, still Zulaikha,
Still, without a veil, Zulaikha.
But a voice as if from Canaan
Call'd him; and a Hand from Darkness
 Touch'd; and ere a living Lip
Through the mirage of bewilder'd
Eyes seduced him, he recoil'd,
 And let the skirt of danger slip.

PART II.

Alas for those who having tasted once
Of that forbidden vintage of the lips
That, press'd and pressing, from each other
draw

The draught that so intoxicates them both,
That, while upon the wings of Day and Night
Time rustles on, and Moons do wax and wane,
As from the very Well of Life they drink,
And, drinking, fancy they shall never drain.
But rolling Heaven from his ambush whispers,
"So in my license is it not set down:
"Ah for the sweet societies I make
"At Morning, and before the Nightfall break,
"Ah for the bliss that coming Night fills up,
"And Morn looks in to find an empty Cup!"

Once in Baghdad a poor Arab,
After weary days of fasting,
Into the Khalifah's banquet-
Chamber, where, aloft in State
Harun the Great at supper sate,
Push'd, and pushing, with the throng,
Got before a perfume-breathing
Pasty, like the lip of Shirin
Luscious, or the Poet's song.
Soon as seen, the famisht clown

Seizes up and swallows down.
Then his mouth undaunted wiping—
“Oh Khalifah, hear me swear,
“While I breathe the dust of Baghdad,
“Ne’er at any other table
“Than at Thine to sup or dine.”
Grimly laugh’d Harun, and answer’d;
“Fool! who think’st to arbitrate
“What is in the hands of Fate—
“Take, and thrust him from the Gate!”

While a full Year was counted by the Moon,
Salaman and Absal rejoiced together,
And neither Shah nor Sage his face beheld.
They question’d those about him, and from
 them
Heard something: then himself to presence
 summon’d,
And all the truth was told. Then Sage and
 Shah
Struck out with hand and foot in his redress.
And first with Reason, which is also best;
Reason that rights the wanderer; that com-
 pletes
The imperfect; Reason that resolves the knot
Of either world, and sees beyond the Veil.
For Reason is the fountain from of old
From which the Prophets drew, and none
 beside:
Who boasts of other inspiration, lies—
There are no other Prophets than The Wise.

And first The Shah:—"Salaman, Oh my Soul,
"Light of the eyes of my Prosperity,
"And making bloom the court of Hope with
 rose;
"Year after year, Salaman, like a bud
"That cannot blow, my own blood I devour'd,
"Till, by the seasonable breath of God,
"At last I blossom'd into thee, my Son;
"Oh, do not wound me with a dagger thorn;
"Let not the full-blown rose of Royalty
"Be left to wither in a hand unclean.
"For what thy proper pastime? Bat in hand
"To mount and manage Rakhsh* along the
 Field;
"Not, with no weapon but a wanton curl
"Idly reposing on a silver breast.
"Go, fly thine arrow at the antelope
"And lion—let me not My lion see
"Slain by the arrow eyes of a ghazal.
"Go, challenge Zal or Rustam to the Field,
"And smite the warriors' neck; not, flying
 them,
"Beneath a woman's foot submit thine own.
"Oh wipe the woman's henna from thy hand,
"Withdraw thee from the minion† who from
 thee
"Dominion draws, and draws me with thee
 down;
"Years have I held my head aloft, and all
"For Thee—Oh shame if thou prepare my
 Fall!"

* "Lightning." The name of Rustam's famous Horse in the Shah-Nameh.

† "Shah," and "Shahid" (A Mistress).

When before Shiruyeh's dagger
 Kai Khusrau,* his Father, fell,
 He declared this Parable—
 "Wretch!—There was a branch that waxing
 "Wanton o'er the root he drank from,
 "At a draught by living water
 "Drain'd wherewith himself to crown;
 "Died the root—and with him died
 "The branch—and barren was brought
 down!"

The Shah ceased counsel, and the Sage began.
 "Oh last new vintage of the Vine of Life
 "Planted in Paradise; Oh Master-stroke,
 "And all-concluding flourish of the Pen
 "Kun fa yakun;† Thyself prime Archetype,
 "And ultimate Accomplishment of Man!
 "The Almighty hand that out of common earth
 "Thy mortal outward to the perfect form
 "Of Beauty moulded, in the fleeting dust
 "Inscribed Himself, and in thy bosom set
 "A mirror to reflect Himself in Thee.
 "Let not that dust by rebel passion blown
 "Obliterate that character: nor let
 "That Mirror sullied by the breath impure,
 "Or form of carnal beauty fore-possess,
 "Be made incapable of the Divine.
 "Supreme is thine Original degree,

* Khusrau Parviz (Chosroe The Victorious), Son of Noshirvan The Great; slain, after Thirty Years of prosperous reign, by his Son Shiruyeh, who, according to some, was in love with his Father's mistress Shirin. See further on one of the most dramatic Tragedies in Persian history.

† "Be! and it is"—The famous word of Creation stolen from Genesis by the Kuran.

"Thy Star upon the top of Heaven; but Lust
 "Will bring it down, down even to the Dust!"

Quoth a Muezzin to the crested
 Cock—"Oh Prophet of the Morning,

"Never Prophet like to you

"Prophesied of Dawn, nor Muezzin

"With so shrill a voice of warning

"Woke the sleeper to confession

"Crying, 'La allah illa 'llah,

Muhammad rasuluhu."*

"One, methinks, so rarely gifted

"Should have prophesied and sung

"In Heav'n, the Birds of Heav'n among,

"Not with these poor hens about him,

"Raking in a heap of dung."

"And," replied the Cock, "in Heaven

"Once I was; but by my foolish

"Lust to this uncleanly living

"With my sorry mates about me

"Thus am fallen. Otherwise,

"I were prophesying Dawn,

"Before the gates of Paradise."†

Of all the Lover's sorrows, next to that
 Of Love by Love forbidden, is the voice
 Of Friendship turning harsh in Love's reproof,

* "There is no God but God; Muhammad is his Prophet."

† Jami, as, may be, other Saintly Doctors, kept soberly to one Wife. But wherefore, under Law of Muhammad, should the Cock be selected (as I suppose he is) for a "Caution," because of his indulgence in Polygamy, however unusual among Birds.

And overmuch of Counsel—whereby Love
Grows stubborn, and recoiling unsupprest
Within, devours the heart within the breast.
Salaman heard; his Soul came to his lips;
Reproaches struck not Absal out of him,
But drove Confusion in; bitter became
The drinking of the sweet draught of Delight
And waned the splendor of his Moon of Beauty.
His breath was Indignation, and his heart
Bled from the arrow, and his anguish grew.
How bear it?—By the hand of Hatred dealt,
Easy to meet—and deal with, blow for blow;
But from Love's hand which one must not
requite,

And cannot yield to—what resource but Flight?
Resolved on which, he victual'd and equipp'd
A Camel, and one night he led it forth,
And mounted—he with Absal at his side,
Like sweet twin almonds in a single shell.
And Love least murmurs at the narrow space
'That draws him close and closer in embrace.

When the Moon of Canaan Yusuf
In the prison of Egypt darken'd,
Nightly from her spacious Palace-

Chamber, and its rich array,
Stole Zulaikha like a fantom
To the dark and narrow dungeon
Where her buried Treasure lay.

Then to those about her wond'ring—
“Were my Palace,” she replied,
“Wider than Horizon-wide,
“It were narrower than an Ant's eye,

"Were my Treasure not inside;
 "And an Ant's eye, if but there
 "My Lover, Heaven's horizon were."

Six days Salaman on the Camel rode,
 And then the hissing arrows of reproof
 Were fallen far behind; and on the Seventh
 He halted on the Seashore; on the shore
 Of a great Sea that reaching like a floor
 Of rolling Firmament below the Sky's
 From Kaf to Kaf, to Gau and Mahi* down
 Descended, and its Stars were living eyes.
 The Face of it was as it were a range
 Of moving Mountains; or a countless host
 Of Camels trooping tumultuously up,
 Host over host, and foaming at the lip.
 Within, innumerable glittering things
 Sharp as cut Jewels, to the sharpest eye
 Scarce visible, hither and hither slipping,
 As silver scissors slice a blue brocade;
 But should the Dragon coil'd in the abyss*

* Bull and Fish — the lowest Substantial Base of Earth. "He first made the Mountains; then cleared the Face of the Earth from Sea; then fixed it fast on Gau; Gau on Mahi; and Mahi on Air; and Air on what? on Nothing; Nothing on Nothing, all is Nothing—Enough." Attar quoted in De Sacy's *Pendnamah*, xxxv.

† The Sidereal Dragon, whose Head, according to the Pauranic (or poetic) astronomers of the East, devoured the Sun and Moon in Eclipse. "But we know," said Ramachandra to Sir W. Jones, "that the supposed Head and Tail of the Dragon mean only the Nodes, or points formed by intersections of the Ecliptic and the Moon's Orbit."—Sir W. Jones' Works, Vol. iv., p. 74.

Emerge to light, his starry counter-sign
Would shrink into the depth of Heav'n aghast.

Salaman eyed the moving wilderness
On which he thought, once launcht, no foot,
nor eye

Should ever follow; forthwith he devised
Of sundry scented woods along the shore
A little shallop like a Quarter-moon,
Wherein Absal and He like Sun and Moon
Enter'd as into some Celestial Sign;
That, figured like a bow, but arrow-like
In flight, was feather'd with a little sail,
And, pitcht upon the water like a duck,
So with her bosom sped to her Desire.

When they had sail'd their vessel for a Moon,
And marr'd their beauty with the wind o' the
Sea,

Suddenly in mid sea reveal'd itself
An Isle, beyond imagination fair;
An Isle that all was Garden; not a Flower,
Nor Bird of plumage like the flower, but there;
Some like the Flower, and others like the
Leaf;

Some, as the Pheasant and the Dove adorn'd
With crown and collar, over whom alone,
The jewel'd Peacock like a Sultan shone;
While the Musicians, and among them Chief
The Nightingale, sang hidden in the trees
Which, arm in arm, from fingers quivering
With any breath of air, fruit of all kind
Down scatter'd in profusion to their feet,
Where fountains of sweet water ran between,

And Sun and shadow chequer-chased the green.
 Here Iram-garden seem'd in secrecy
 Blowing the rosebud of its Revelation;*
 Or Paradise, forgetful of the dawn
 Of Audit, lifted from her face the veil.

Salaman saw the Isle, and thought no more
 Of Further—there with Absal he sate down,
 Absal and He together side by side
 Together like the Lily and the Rose,
 Together like the Soul and Body, one.
 Under its trees in one another's arms
 They slept—they drank its fountains hand in
 hand—
 Paraded with the Peacock—raced the Part-
 ridge—
 Chased the green Parrot for his stolen fruit,
 Or sang divisions with the Nightingale.
 There was the Rose without a thorn, and there
 The Treasure and no Serpent† to beware—
 Oh think of such a Mistress at your side
 In such a Solitude, and none to chide!

Said to Wamik one who never
 Knew the Lover's passion—"Why
 "Solitary thus and silent
 "Solitary places haunting,
 "Like a Dreamer, like a Spectre,
 "Like a thing about to die?"
 Wamik answer'd—"Meditating

* Note in Appendix.

† The supposed guardian of buried treasure.

"Flight with Azra* to the Desert:
"There by so remote a Fountain
 "That, whichever way one travel'd,
"League on league, onc yet should never
"See the face of Man; forever
"There to gaze on my Beloved;
"Gaze, till Gazing out of Gazing
"Grew to Being Her I gaze on,
"She and I no more, but in One
"Undivided Being blended.
"All that is by Nature twain
"Fears, or suffers by the pain
"Of Separation: Love is only
 "Perfect when itself transcends
"Itself, and, one with that it loves,
 "In undivided Being blends."

When by and by the Shah was made aware
Of that heart-breaking Flight, his royal robe
He changed for ashes, and his Throne for dust,
And wept awhile in darkness and alone.
Then rose; and, taking counsel from the Sage,
Pursuit set everywhere afoot: but none
Could trace the footstep of the flying Deer.
Then from his secret Art the Sage-Vizyr
A Magic Mirror made; a Mirror like
The bosom of All-wise Intelligence
Reflecting in its mystic compass all
Within the sev'n-fold volume of the World
Involved; and, looking in that Mirror's face,
The Shah beheld the face of his Desire.

* Wamik and Azra (Virgin) two typical Lovers.

Beheld those lovers, like that earliest pair
Of Lovers, in this other Paradise
So far from human eyes in the mid sea,
And yet within the magic glass so near
As with a finger one might touch them, isled,
The Shah beheld them; and compassion
touch'd

His eyes and anger died upon his lips;
And arm'd with Righteous Judgment as he
was,

Yet, seeing those two Lovers with one lip
Drinking that cup of Happiness and Tears
In which Farewell had never yet been flung,*
He paused for their Repentance to recall
The lifted arm that was to shatter all.

The Lords of Wrath have perish'd by the blow
Themselves had aim'd at others long ago.
Draw not in haste the sword, which Fate, may
be,
Will sheathe, hereafter to be drawn on Thee.

Farhad, who the shapeless mountain
Into human likeness moulded,
Under Shirin's eyes as slavish
Potters' earth himself became.

Then the secret fire of jealous
Frenzy, catching and devouring

* A pebble flung into a Cup being a signal for a company to break up.

Kai Khusran, broke into flame.
With that ancient Hag of Darkness
Plotting, at the midnight Banquet
Farhad's golden cup he poison'd,
And in Shirin's eyes alone
Reign'd—But Fate that Fate revenges,
Arms Shiruyeh with the dagger
That at once from Shirin tore,
And hurl'd him lifeless from his throne.*

But as the days went on, and still The Shah
Beheld his Son how in the Woman lost,
And still the Crown that should adorn his head,
And still the Throne that waited for his foot,
Both trampled under by a base desire,
Of which the Soul was still unsatisfied—
Then from the sorrow of The Shah fell Fire;
To Gracelessness ungracious he became,
And, quite to shatter that rebellious lust,
Upon Salaman all his Will, with all†
His Sage-Vizyr's Might-magic arm'd, dis-
charged.
And lo! Salaman to his Mistress turn'd,

*One story is that Khusrau had promised that if Farhad cut through a Mountain, and brought a Stream through, Shirin should be his. Farhad was on the point of achieving his work, when Khusrau sent an old Woman (here, perhaps, purposely confounded with Fate) to tell him Shirin was dead; whereon Farhad threw himself headlong from the Rock. The Sculpture at Beysitun (or Besitun), where Rawlinson has deciphered Darius and Xerxes, was traditionally called Farhad's.

†He Mesmerizes him!—See also further on this Power of the Will.

But could not reach her—look'd and look'd
again,

And palpitated tow'rd her—but in vain!

Oh Misery! As to the Bankrupt's eyes

The Gold he may not finger! or the Well

To him who sees a-thirst, and cannot reach,

Or Heav'n above reveal'd to those in Hell!

Yet when Salaman's anguish was extreme,

The door of Mercy open'd, and he saw

That Arm he knew to be his Father's reacht

To lift him from the pit in which he lay:

Timidly tow'rd his Father's eyes his own

He lifted, pardon-pleading, crime-confest,

And drew once more to that forsaken Throne,

As the stray bird one day will find her nest.

One was asking of a Teacher,

"How a Father his reputed

"Son for his should recognize?"

Said the Master, "By the stripling,

"As he grows to manhood, growing

"Like to his reputed Father,

"Good or Evil, Fool or Wise.

"Lo the disregarded Darnel

"With itself adorns the Wheat-field,

"And for all the vernal season

"Satisfies the farmer's eye;

"But the hour of harvest coming,

"And the thrasher by and by,

"Then a barren ear shall answer,

" 'Darnel, and no Wheat, am I.' "

Yet Ah for that poor Lover! "Next the curse
"Of Love by Love forbidden nothing worse
"Than Friendship turn'd in Love's reproof
unkind,

"And Love from Love divorcing"—Thus I
said:

Alas a worse and worse is yet behind—

Love's back-blow of Revenge for having fled!

Salaman bow'd his forehead to the dust
Before his Father; to his Father's hand
Fast—but yet fast and faster to his own
Clung one who by no tempest of reproof
Or wrath might be dissever'd from the stem
She grew to: till between Remorse and Love
He came to loathe his Life and long for
Death.

And as from him She would not be divorced
With Her he fled again: he fled—but now
To no such Island centered in the sea
As lull'd them into Paradise before;
But to the Solitude of Desolation
The Wilderness of Death. And as before
Of sundry scented woods along the shore
A shallop he devised to carry them
Over the waters whither foot nor eye
Should ever follow them, he thought—so now
Of sere wood strewn about the plain of Death,
A raft to bear them through the wave of Fire
Into Annihilation, he devised,
Gather'd, and built; and, firing with a Torch,
Into the central flame Absal and He
Sprung hand in hand exulting. But the Sage
In secret all had order'd; and the Flame,

Directed by his self-fulfilling Will,
Devouring Her to ashes, left untouch'd
Salaman—all the baser metal burn'd,
And to itself the authentic Gold return'd.

PART III.

From the Beginning such has been the Fate
 Of Man, whose very clay was soak'd in tears.
 For when at first of common Earth they took,
 And moulded to the stature of the Soul,
 For Forty days, full Forty days, the cloud
 Of Heav'n wept over him from head to foot:
 And when the Forty days had passed to Night,
 The Sunshine of one solitary day
 Look'd out of Heav'n to dry the weeping clay,*
 And though that sunshine in the long arrear
 Of darkness on the breathless image rose,
 Yet, with the Living, every wise man knows
 Such consummation scarcely shall be here!

Salaman fired the pile; and in the flame
 That passing him, consumed Absal like straw,
 Died his Divided Self, his Individual
 Survived, and, like a living Soul from which
 The Body falls, strange, naked, and alone.
 Then his cry to Heaven—his eyelashes
 Wept blood—his sighs stood like a smoke in
 Heaven,
 And Morning rent her garment at his anguish.
 And when Night came, that drew the pen
 across

*Some such Legend is quoted by De Sacy and D'Herbelot from some Commentaries on the Kuran.

The written woes of Day for all but him,
 Crouch'd in a lonely corner of the house,
 He seem'd to feel about him in the dark
 For one who was not, and whom no fond word
 Could summon from the Void in which she lay.

And so the Wise One found him where he sate
 Bow'd down alone in darkness; and once more
 Made the long-silent voice of Reason sound
 In the deserted Palace of his Soul;
 Until Salaman lifted up his head
 To bow beneath the Master; sweet it seem'd,
 Sweeping the chaff and litter from his own,
 To be the very dust of Wisdom's door,
 Slave of the Firman of the Lord of Life,
 Who pour'd the wine of Wisdom in his cup,
 Who laid the dew of Peace upon his lips;
 Yea, wrought by Miracle in his behalf.
 For when old Love return'd to Memory,
 And broke in passion from his lips, The Sage,
 Under whose waxing Will Existence rose
 From Nothing, and, relaxing, waned again,
 Raising a Fantom Image of Absal,
 Set it awhile before Salaman's eyes,
 Till, having sow'd the seed of comfort there,
 It went again down to Annihilation.
 But ever, as the Fantom past away
 The Sage would tell of a Celestial Love;
 "Zuhrah,"* he said, "Zuhrah, compared with
 whom
 "That brightest star that bears her name in
 Heav'n

*"Zuhrah." The Planetary and Celestial Venus.

"Was but a winking taper; and Absal,
 "Queen-star of Beauties in this world below,
 "But her distorted image in the stream
 "Of fleeting Matter; and all Eloquence,
 "And Soul-enchaining harmonies of Song,
 "A far-off echo of that Harp in Heav'n
 "Which Dervish-dances to her harmony."

Salaman listen'd, and inclined—again
 Entreated, inclination ever grew;
 Until The Sage beholding in his Soul
 The Spirit* quicken, so effectually
 With Zuhrah wrought, that she reveal'd herself
 In her pure luster to Salaman's Soul,
 And blotting Absal's Image from his breast,
 There reign'd instead. Celestial Beauty seen,
 He left the Earthly; and, once come to know
 Eternal Love, the Mortal he let go.

The Crown of Empire how supreme a lot!
 The Sultan's Throne how lofty! Yea, but not
 For All—None but the Heaven-ward foot may
 dare
 To mount—The head that touches Heaven to
 wear!—

When the Beloved of Royal augury
 Was rescued from the bondage of Absal.
 Then he arose, and shaking off the dust
 Of that lost travel, girded up his heart,

*"Maani." The Mystical pass-word of the Sufis, to
 express the transcendental New Birth of the Soul.

And look'd with undefiled robe to Heaven.
 Then was his Head worthy to wear the Crown,
 His Foot to mount the Throne. And then The
 Shah

From all the quarters of his World-wide realm
 Summon'd all those who under Him the Ring
 Of Empire wore, King, Counselor, Amir;
 Of whom not one but to Salaman did
 Obeisance, and lifted up his neck
 To yoke it under His supremacy.

Then The Shah crown'd him with the Golden
 Crown,

And set the Golden Throne beneath his feet,
 And over all the heads of the Assembly,
 And in the ears of all, his Jewel-word
 With the Diamond of Wisdom cut, and said:—

“My Son,* the Kingdom of The World is not
 “Eternal, nor the sum of right desire;
 “Make thou the Law reveal'd of God thy
 Law,

“The voice of Intellect Divine within
 “Interpreter; and considering To-day
 “To-morrow's Seed-field, ere That come to
 bear,

“Sow, with the harvest of Eternity.
 “And, as all Work, and, most of all, the Work

*One sees Jami taking advantage of his allegorical Shah to read a lesson to the Living,—whose ears Advice, unlike Praise, scarce ever reached, unless obliquely, and by Fable. The Warning (and doubtless with good reason) is principally aimed at the Minister.

- “That Kings are born to, wisely should be wrought,
“Where doubtful of thine own sufficiency,
“Ever, as I have done, consult the Wise.
“Turn not thy face away from the Old ways,
“That were the canon of the Kings of Old;
“Nor cloud with Tyranny the glass of Justice:
“By Mercy rather to right Order turn
“Confusion, and Disloyalty to Love.
“In thy provision for the Realm’s estate,
“And for the Honor that becomes a King,
“Drain not thy People’s purse—the Tyranny
“Which Thee enriches at thy Subject’s cost,
“Awhile shall make thee strong; but in the end
“Shall bow thy neck beneath thy People’s hate,
 “And lead thee with the Robber down to Hell.
“Thou art a Shepherd and thy Flock the People,
“To help and save, not ravage and destroy;
“For which is for the other, Flock or Shepherd?
“And join with thee True men to keep the Flock—
“Dogs, if you will—but trusty—head in leash,
“Whose teeth are for the Wolf, not for the Lamb,
“And least of all the Wolf’s accomplices.
“For Shahs must have Vizyrs—but be they Wise
“And Trusty—knowing well the Realm’s estate—

- “Knowing how far to Shah and Subject bound
“On either hand—not by extortion, nor
“By usury wrung from the People's purse,
“Feeding their Master, and themselves (with
whom
“Enough is apt enough to make rebel)
“To such a surfeit feeding as feeds Hell.
“Proper in soul and body be they—pitiful
“To Poverty—hospitable to the Saint—
“Their sweet Access a salve to wounded
Hearts;
“Their Wrath a sword against Iniquity,
“But at thy bidding only to be drawn;
“Whose Ministers they are, to bring thee in
“Report of Good or Evil through the Realm:
“Which to confirm with thine immediate
Eye,
“And least of all, remember—least of all,
“Suffering Accuser also to be Judge,
“By surest steps up-builds Prosperity.”

MEANING OF THE STORY.

Under the leaf of many a Fable lies
The Truth for those who look for it; of this
If thou wouldst look behind and find the Fruit,
(To which the Wiser hand hath found his way)
Hath thy desire—No Tale of Me and Thee,
Though I and Thou be its Interpreters.*
What signifies The Shah? and what The
Sage?

And what Salaman not of Woman born?
Who was Absal who drew him to Desire?
And what the Kingdom that awaited him
When he had drawn his Garment from her
hand?

What means That Sea? And what that Fiery
Pile?

And what that Heavenly Zuhrah who at last
Clear'd Absal from the Mirror of his Soul?
Listen to me, and you shall understand
The Word that Lover wrote along the sand.

The Incomparable Creator, when this World
He did create, created first of all

*The Story is of Generals, though enacted by Particulars.

The First Intelligence*—First of a Chain
Of Ten Intelligences, of which the Last
Sole Agent is in this our Universe,
Active Intelligence so call'd; The One
Distributor of Evil and of Good,
Of Joy and Sorrow. Himself apart from
Matter,

In Essence and in Energy—He yet
Hath fashion'd all that is—Material Form,
And Spiritual, all from Him—by Him
Directed all, and in his Bounty drown'd.
Therefore is He that Firman-issuing Shah
To whom the World was subject. But because
What He distributes to the Universe

*“These Ten Intelligences are only another Form of the Gnostic Dæmones. The Gnostics held that Matter and Spirit could have no Intercourse—they were, as it were, incommensurate. How then, granting this premise, was Creation possible? Their answer was a kind of gradual Elimination. God, the ‘Actus Purus,’ created an Aeon; this Aeon created a Second; and so on, until the Tenth Aeon was sufficiently Material (as the Ten were in a continually descending Series) to affect Matter, and so cause the Creation by giving to Matter the Spiritual Form.

Similarly we have in Sufiism these Ten Intelligences in a corresponding Series, and for the same End.

There are Ten Intelligences, and Nine Heavenly Spheres, of which the Ninth is the Uppermost Heaven, appropriated to the First Intelligence; the Eighth, that of the Zodiac, to the Second; the Seventh, Saturn, to the Third; the Sixth, Jupiter, to the Fourth; the Fifth, Mars, to the Fifth; the Fourth, the Sun, to the Sixth; the Third, Venus, to the Seventh; the Second, Mercury, to the Eighth; the First, the Moon, to the Ninth; and The Earth is the peculiar Sphere of the Tenth, or lowest Intelligence, called The Active.”—E. B. C.—v. Appendix.

Another and a Higher Power supplies,
Therefore all those who comprehend aright,
That Higher in The Sage will recognize.

His the Prime Spirit that, spontaneously
Projected by the Tenth Intelligence
Was from no womb of Matter reproduced
A special Essence called The Soul of Man;
A Child of Heaven, in raiment unbeshamed
Of Sensual taint, and so Salaman named.

And who Absal?—The Sense-adoring Body,
Slave to the Blood and Sense—through whom
The Soul,
Although the Body's very Life it be,
Doth yet imbibe the knowledge and delight
Of things of Sense; and these in such a bond
United as God only can divide,
As Lovers in this Tale are signified.

And what the Flood on which they sail'd, with
those
Fantastic creatures peopled; and that Isle
In which their Paradise awhile they made,
And thought, forever?—That false Paradise
Amid the fluctuating Waters found
Of Sensual passion, in whose bosom lies
A world of Being from the light of God
Deep as in unsubiding Deluge drown'd.

And why was it that Absal in that Isle
So soon deceived in her Delight, and He
Fell short of his Desire?—that was to show
How soon the Senses of their Passion tire,
And in a surfeit of themselves expire.

And what the turning of Salaman's Heart
Back to The Shah, and to the throne of Might
And Glory yearning?—What but the return
Of the lost Soul to his true Parentage,
And back from Carnal error looking up
Repentant to his Intellectual Right.

And when the Man between his living Shame
Distracted, and the Love that would not die,
Fled once again—what meant that second
Flight

Into the Desert, and that Pile of Fire
On which he fain his Passion with Himself
Would immolate?—That was the Discipline
To which the living Man himself devotes,
Till all the Sensual dross be scorcht away,
And, to its pure integrity return'd,
His Soul alone survives. But forasmuch
As from a darling Passion so divorced
The wound will open and will bleed anew,
Therefore The Sage would ever and anon
Raise up and set before Salaman's eyes
That Phantom of the past; but evermore
Revealing one Diviner, till his Soul
She fill'd, and blotted out the Mortal Love.
For what is Zuhrah?—What but that Divine
Original, of which the Soul of Man
Darkly possesst, by that fierce Discipline
At last he disengages from the Dust,
And flinging off the baser rags of Sense,
And all in Intellectual Light arrayed,
As Conqueror and King he mounts the Throne,
And wears the Crown of Human Glory—
Whence,

Throne over Throne surmounting, he shall
 reign
One with the Last and First Intelligence.

This is the meaning of this Mystery,
Which to know wholly ponder in thy Heart,
Till all its ancient Secret be enlarged.
Enough—The written Summary I close,
And set my Seal—



THE
TRUTH
GOD ONLY
KNOWS.

APPENDIX.

"To thy Harim Dividuality
"No entrance finds," etc. (p. 128.)

This Sufi Identification with Deity (further illustrated in the Story of Salaman's first flight) is shadowed in a Parable of Jelaluddin, of which here is an outline. "One knocked at the Beloved's Door; and a Voice asked from within, 'Who is there?' and he answered, 'It is I.' Then the Voice said, 'This House will not hold Me and Thee.' And the Door was not opened. Then went the Lover into the Desert, and fasted and prayed in Solitude. And after a Year he returned, and knocked again at the Door. And again the Voice asked, 'Who is there?' and he said, 'It is Thyself!'—and the Door was opened to him."

"O Darling of the soul of Iflatun
"To whom with all his school Aristo bows."
(p. 134.)

Some Traveler in the East—Professor Eastwick, I think—tells us that in endeavoring to explain to an Eastern Cook the nature of an Irish Stew, the man said he knew well enough

about "*Aristo*." "*Iflatun*" might almost as well have been taken for "*Vol-au-vent*."

"Like Noah's, puff'd with Insolence and Pride," etc. (p. 135.)

In the Kuran God engages to save Noah and his Family,—meaning all who believed in the Warning. One of Noah's Sons (Canaan or Ham, some think) would not believe. "And the Ark swam with them between waves like Mountains; and Noah called up to his Son, who was separated from him, saying, 'Embark with us, my Son, and stay not with the Unbelievers.' He answered, 'I will get on a Mountain, which will secure me from the Water.' Noah replied, 'There is no security this Day from the Decree of God, except for him on whom he shall have Mercy.' And a Wave passed between them, and he became one of those who were drowned. And it was said, 'O Earth, swallow up thy waters; and Thou, O Heaven, withhold thy Rain!' And immediately the Water abated, and the Decree was fulfilled, and the Ark rested on the Mountain Al Judi; and it was said, 'Away with the ungodly People!' And Noah called upon his Lord, and said, 'O Lord, verily my Son is of my Family; and thy Promise is True: for Thou art the most just of those who exercise Judgment.' God answered, 'O Noah, verily he is not of thy Family: this intercession of

thine for him is not a righteous work.'"—
Sale's Kuran, vol. ii. p. 21.

"Finer than any Bridal-puppet, which
"To prove another's Love a Woman sends,"
etc. (p. 139.)

In Atkinson's version of the "Kitabi Kulsum Naneh" [c. xii.] we find among other Ceremonials and Proprieties of which the Book treats, that when a Woman wished to ascertain another's Love, she sent a Doll on a Tray with flowers and sweetmeats, and judged how far her affection was reciprocated by the Doll being returned to her drest in a Robe of Honor, or in Black. The same Book also tells of two Dolls—Bride and Bridegroom, I suppose—being used on such occasions; the test of Affection being whether the one sent were returned with or without its Fellow.

"The Royal Game of Chugan." (p. 140.)

For centuries the Royal Game of Persia, and adopted (Ouseley thinks) under varying modifications of name and practice by other nations, was played by Horsemen, who, suitably habited, and armed with semicircular headed Bats or Sticks, strove to drive a Ball through a Goal of upright Pillars. We may call it "Horse-hockey," as heretofore played by young Englishmen in the Maidan of Calcutta, and other Indian cities, I believe, and now in England itself under the name of Polo.

THE MUEZZIN'S CRY. (p. 150.)

I am informed by a distinguished Arabic Scholar that the proper Cry of the Muezzin is, with some slight local variations, such as he heard it at Cairo and Damascus:

Allah Akbar, Allah Akbar;
 Allah Akbar, Allah Akbar;
 Ishhad la allah illa 'llah;
 Ishhad la allah illa 'llah;
 Ishhad la allah illa 'llah;
 Ishhad Muhamma rasuluhu;
 Ishhad Muhamma rasuluhu;
 Ishhad Muhamma rasuluhu;
 Haya 'ala 's-salat, Haya 'ala 's-salat,
 Inna 's-salat khair min an-naum.

"God is great" (four times); "Confess that there is no God but God" (three times); "Confess that Muhammad is the prophet of God" (three times); "Come to Prayer, Come to Prayer, for Prayer is better than Sleep."

[A more accurate account will be found in Lane's Modern Egyptians.]

THE GARDEN OF IRAM. (p. 154.)

"Here Iram-garden seem'd in secrecy
 "Blowing the rosebud of its Revelation;"

"Mahomet," says Sir W. Jones, "in the Chapter of The Morning, toward the end of his Alcoran, mentions a Garden called 'Irem,' which is no less celebrated by the Asiatic Poets than that of the Hesperides by the

Greeks. It was planted, as the Commentators say, by a king named Shedad,"—deep in the Sands of Arabia Felix—"and was once seen by an Arabian who wandered far into the Desert in search of a lost Camel."

THE TEN INTELLIGENCES. (p. 168.)

A curious parallel to this doctrine is quoted by Mr. Morley (*Critical Miscellanies*, Series II. p. 318), from so anti-gnostic a Doctor as Paley, in Ch. III. of his *Natural Theology*.

"As we have said, therefore, God prescribes limits to his power, that he may let in the exercise, and thereby exhibit demonstrations, of his wisdom. For then i. e., such laws and limitations being laid down, it is as though some Being should have fixed certain rules; and, if we may so speak, provided certain materials; and, afterward, have committed to some other Being, out of these materials, and in subordination to these rules, the task of drawing forth a Creation; a supposition which evidently leaves room, and induces indeed a necessity, for contrivance. Nay, there may be many such Agents, and many ranks of these. We do not advance this as a doctrine either of philosophy or religion; but we say that the subject may be safely represented under this view; because the Deity, acting himself by general laws, will have the same consequence upon our reasoning, as if he had prescribed these laws to another."

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